

# FE Week

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IN THE SOUTH WEST**

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MORE EXPECTED**

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## ‘MISTAKES’ LED TO ‘COSTLY AND INEFFICIENT’ BUILDINGS

Main picture: Handbridge  
and, inset, Ellesmere Port



**One site ‘difficult’ for learners to get  
to and ‘unsuitable for provision’**

**£68m developments leave  
college with huge debts**

**‘Sell one off’ says  
commissioner**

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Further Education Commissioner Dr David Collins has told how a series of blunders over the “size, location and financing” of these £68m West Cheshire College builds left

it with crippling debt as he called on Skills Minister Nick Boles to order that one be sold off.

He described the buildings as “costly and inefficient” — and the college has revealed plans to shut the Handbridge site, as recommended by Dr Collins, just four

years after rebuilding it on a site “relatively difficult to reach by public transport”.

It is also “unsuitable for the provision it offers,” according to Dr Collins.

The building, in Chester, opened around the same time as the college’s Ellesmere

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NEWS

‘OPEN TRAINEESHIPS UP’ PLEA AS STARTS HIT 5K IN FIRST QUARTER

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The government has been urged to open traineeships up to more providers after the programme was boosted with figures showing 1,700 more people started on the scheme in the first three months of 2014/15 than in the entire first half of last academic year.

Information in the latest statistical first release (SFR) showed 5,000 starts on the programme in the first quarter of this academic year, compared to 3,300 in the first six months of 2013/14.

By the end of last academic year — the programme’s first — there had been 10,400 starts and a spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) welcomed the latest figures as “building on the first year of the programme”.

It comes after *FE Week* revealed in December how Job Centre Plus (JCP) staff had been set a target of 10,000 traineeship referrals by the end of this academic year.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said he was “encouraged” by the SFR figures, but that he wanted a review of restrictions limiting the delivery of traineeships to mainly grade one and two providers.

“By restricting the delivery, many employers will not get access to the programme because they want to continue to work with their apprenticeship provider,” he told *FE Week*.

“We understood the restriction in the first year but we have to now reconsider this issue and allow provides to produce the

evidence that they can deliver high quality traineeships.”

The SFR also showed that apprenticeship starts among 16 to 18-year-olds between August and October last year were provisionally up by almost 9,000 — totalling 54,100 — on the same period in 2013/2014.

But the increase could be explained by problems with reporting learner data through the Skills Funding Agency’s Funding Information System (Fis) during the reporting period relating to the 2013/14 numbers. Final figures for the August to October 2013 period showed 54,400 starts for 16 to 18s.

And the provisional figures further showed that all-age apprenticeship starts between August and October last year stood at 147,500 — an increase of almost 40,000 on the previous year. But again, the 2013/14 August to October figures ended up actually being 130,300 starts.

Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: “It’s good to see more and more 16 to 18 year-olds pursuing traineeships and apprenticeships, which will help them to gain the skills that businesses need and start them on a journey along their chosen career path.

“As numbers increase we need to see a continued commitment to skills training from the next government, including further development of traineeships into a pre-apprenticeship programme to support those who are not yet ready to take up a full apprenticeship with an employer.”

A BIS spokesperson said she was not aware of any plans to open traineeships up to grade three and four providers.

Law change ‘could lead to HE in FE complaints rise’

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Student complaints about FE colleges offering degrees could rise with a proposed new law putting them under the universities ombudsman, principals have been warned.

Complaints about FE colleges’ higher education courses will be scrutinised by the Office for Independent Adjudication in Higher Education (OIAHE) if the government’s Consumer Rights Bill passes later this year.

Currently the OIAHE deals with complaints about FE higher education provision if they relate to something for which the validating university is responsible.

Responsibility varies depending on the validation agreement, but the OIAHE tends to deal with complaints over how grade disputes were handled, extenuating circumstances or mis-sold courses.

Ben Elger, OIAHE chief operating officer, said this could lead to a rise in the number of complaints, but said it was “impossible to see” how big the rise would be.

Smita Jamdar,



Ben Elger

partner and head of education at SGH Martineau LLP, also warned the change in the law would “bring with it the powerful new remedies of a right to a repeat performance and a right to a discount”.

“More colleges that deliver higher education will find themselves directly subject to the OIAHE. This will almost certainly continue the upward trend as far as learner complaints are concerned,” she said.

The news follows the 2013/14 Higher Education Review by higher education inspectors QAA, which said more than a quarter of FE colleges offering higher education needed to improve their complaints handling.

However, Association of Colleges higher education policy manager Nick Davy said he didn’t “believe that there should be a significant increase in external complaints”.

He said: “In general the system works reasonably well although we have come across a few occasions where students haven’t been clear which organisations is their external adjudicator.

“Hopefully the Consumer Rights Act will clarify the situation.”

And FE colleges will



Nick Davy

FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

FE loans top 52k

More than 2,300 applications for FE loans in December have taken the total so far this year to 52,670.

The figure for the number of applications for 24+ advanced learning loans so far this academic year lags behind the 57,181 applications made by the end of December last year.

Although the 2,340 applications received in the month is an increase on December 2013’s 2,271.

Find a Traineeship

An online service to help young people find and apply for traineeships has launched.

The Skills Funding Agency called on providers to encourage interested learners to log on to the early version of the Find a Traineeship so the agency could gather user data and feedback to improve and develop the service.

The site is available at [www.gov.uk/find-traineeship](http://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship) and more information can be found on the agency’s digital blog.

Teach Too phase two

The Education and Training Foundation has published a report on phase one of its Teach Too initiative to set up projects encouraging professionals into classrooms to teach their trades.

Phase two will provide £580,000 to fund provider-led projects supporting colleges, providers, and employers to engage in Teach Too practice.

The deadline to apply to run a maths-based project is noon tomorrow (February 3), while the deadline for science, technology, engineering and other subjects is February 13.

Visit [www.teachtoo.org](http://www.teachtoo.org) for details.

also be able to access support through OIAHE subscription, although the model and costs were yet to be decided.

“We will have a direct relationship with the FE institutions,” said Mr Elger.

“Under the new legislation we will be able look at what’s actually gone on in the complaints process in the college itself.”

He added a “perception issue” could lead to a rise in student complaints, if students felt it was easier to make their voices heard.

“Perhaps students are more likely to see there’s a clear advantage of going to the OIAHE, because we can look at a complaint without having to worry about who is responsible for which bit,” said Mr Elger.

“The first part of our mission obviously deal with the complaint as a kind of ombudsman, the second part is to share knowledge and good practice and good complaints handling information,” he added.

Amendments to the bill are still being considered by the House of Commons and the House of Lords, but it is due to be given Royal Assent before March 30.

See page 13 for an expert piece by Smita Jamdar on FE college learner complaints

# Director defends subcontracting with 120-plus providers

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A director of a general FE college has defended its quality assessment procedures after *FE Week* research found it had 128 subcontractor agreements — the most in the FE and skills sector and 15 per cent more than anybody else.

Skills Funding Agency (SFA) figures for 2013/14 show that the total value of subcontracting by Yorkshire-based Calderdale College, which has around 6,000 learners and received a good rating in April last year, was £17m.

With a standard management fee of 12 per cent, more than £2m could have been retained by the college.

Joanne Patrickson, director of external funding for Calderdale College, said: “Our college is the lead accountable body on behalf of the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges [a group of seven local colleges] that delivers numerous European Social Funded (ESF) projects as procured by the SFA.

“All sub-contractors are subject to a stringent and robust due diligence process and pre-contract quality assessment prior to contracting.

“Post contracting, all sub-contractors are assessed periodically based on a risk assessment for both the maintenance of due diligence standards but more importantly observation of teaching learning and assessment.”



The college’s £17m figure was divided up between 128 subcontracting arrangements, putting it ahead of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) next, which had 111 worth a total of £13.8m.

A spokesperson for the independent learning provider, which was rated outstanding in November 2012 and has around 15,000 apprentices on its books, said: “CITB is a levy body [which means it is funded by construction industry firms], a charity and a non-departmental government body.

“We only provide training where there are no other trainers available to do the work.

“For the rest, we contract with suppliers from education to provide training courses or places on training courses.

“To ensure the quality of provision we have teams operating across the country which work closely with employers, training providers and trainees to ensure a consistently high standard of provision.

Its management of “around 10 per cent”

means nearly £1.4m was retained.

A total of 4,218 contracts worth £919.2m were signed by 590 prime providers with 1,527 subcontractors across the sector in 2013/14. The average value of each contract was £217,913 and on average a provider will have 7.1 subcontracts.

The highest combined value of subcontracting for a lead provider was £73.3m for Learn Direct. It had 70 contracts, and with a maximum management fee of 30 per cent it could have top sliced nearly £22m.

A spokesperson for Learn Direct, which had 193,340 learners when it was last inspected in April 2013 resulting in a good rating, said: “We have a robust quality control and improvement process to ensure delivery through subcontractors is to a high standard.

“This includes performance reviews, spot checks, business improvement support, audits, and learner satisfaction surveys.”

The second biggest combined figure was £37m dished out by West Nottinghamshire

College through 56 contracts. And with a management fee of up to 20 per cent, it could have held £7.3m back.

Sacha McCarthy (pictured), director of employer engagement for 32,000-learner Vision West Nottinghamshire College, which was rated as good in July 2012, said: “Partnerships [with subcontractors] are a strategic theme of our college and have been part of our long-standing approach to employer-responsive provision.

“The college has invested heavily in stringent quality control measures that ensure that partner provision is as good, and in some cases, better than the college’s own offer.”

An SFA spokesperson told *FE Week* there was “no limit on the number of subcontractors a provider can have”.

She added: “Providers that contract directly with the SFA are responsible for the entirety of the value of their contract and all of the provision it funds.”

## CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Port site, with both having been funded to the tune of £47.9m from the Learning and Skills Council.

Long-term borrowing to top up payment for the builds left the college £14.5m in the red and led in September to Dr Collins being sent in after the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) had assessed its financial health as inadequate.

Nigel Davies (pictured), principal since May 2013, declined to comment on whether Handbridge would be sold, but said: “Any decision to close a site is not taken lightly and has only been done with a clear and detailed understanding of the impact of those changes.”

Mr Boles responded to Dr Collins’ report by sending out two FE Commissioner advisers to ensure the proposed closure process at West Cheshire is carried out properly, including local consultation.

Dr Collins’ report had said: “West Cheshire College is in a very difficult financial position largely due to mistakes that were made in the past with regard to the size, location and financing of its new builds.” It added: “The

college has a significant amount of excess space which is costly and inefficient. It therefore makes sense to consolidate provision on one site – that at Ellesmere Port – and to sell the Handbridge campus.”

A spokesperson for the grade

three 15,257-learner college was “unable to confirm the number of job losses” that would result from the proposed campus closure.

Mr Davies said, despite the closure plan, the college would “continue to have a presence in Chester and is planning to open a more accessible city centre-based location”.

The commissioner’s report on West Cheshire came out the same day (January 29) as Stoke-on-Trent College’s, in which, similarly, it was advised to “review its estate” and potentially sell-off unused buildings. He inspected the college in November after it was also assessed as inadequate for financial health by the SFA.

Dr Collins called on the college to “develop a comprehensive recovery plan by the end of February at the latest”.

Sarah Robinson (pictured), principal of the grade three 15,000-learner college, said: “There are currently no plans to sell off any buildings/sites.” But she added that, since the commissioner’s visit, a staff reduction programme had been launched affecting around 25 employees across all areas, “including senior management”.

An SFA spokesperson said it was working with West Cheshire to “progress” Dr Collins’ findings, while it would “consider the outcome” of his Stoke-on-Trent report.



See editor’s comment on page 8



SPECIAL OFFER

The logo for FE Week, featuring the letters 'FE' in a large, bold font with 'WEEK' underneath, all enclosed in a shield-like shape with laurel wreaths on either side.

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# Tables joy for duo on A-levels and vocational study

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Truro and Penwith College and Runshaw College dominated this year’s league tables for general FE (GFE) and tertiary colleges, government figures released on Thursday (January 29) reveal.

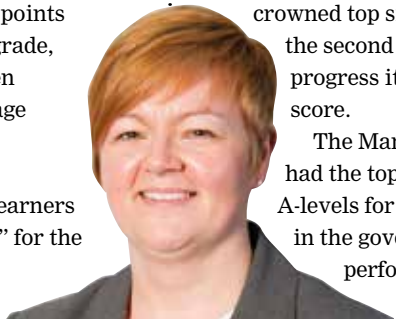
Cornwall-based Truro and Penwith College scored with top marks for value-added — the progress its learners make over their course as expressed as a proportion of a grade — and average point score per student for A-levels.

And Runshaw College, in Lancashire, had the top vocational scores for average points and value-added.

Providers were assessed on a range of measures — including average points score per student, where each grade, such as A or distinction, is given a numerical value and an average taken across the cohort.

Truro and Penwith College principal David Walrond said learners and staff deserved “huge credit” for the results.

Runshaw College deputy



principal Michelle Brabner (pictured) said: “We are proud to have students that are such ambitious and life affirming young people.”

Meanwhile, Rochdale College was been crowned top sixth form college for the second year running for the progress its A-level value-added score.

The Manchester-based provider had the top value-added score for A-levels for a sixth form college in the government’s 16 to 18 performance tables.

Rochdale Sixth Form

Average points score per student					
		Vocational	Score	A-level	Score
GFE and tertiary	Top	Runshaw College	745.4	Truro and Penwith College	840.3
	Bottom	Derwentside College	324.9	Doncaster College	340.3
Sixth form college	Top	Greenhead College	1201.9	Greenhead College	1034.7
	Bottom	Barrow-in-Furness Sixth Form College	387.6	Gateway Sixth Form College	523.7
Value added score					
		Vocational	Score	A-level	Score
GFE and tertiary	Top	Runshaw College	1.17	Truro and Penwith College	0.37
	Bottom	Derwentside College	-0.67	Central Bedfordshire College	-0.62
Sixth form college	Top	Cardinal Newman College	1.03	Rochdale Sixth Form College	0.33
	Bottom	Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College	-0.77	St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College	-0.32

College principal Julian Appleyard said: “We are delighted the hard work of the staff and students is yet again reflected in these tables.”

Rochdale was joined at the top of the sixth form league tables by Greenhead College, which came top for average points score for both A-level and vocational courses, and Cardinal Newman College, which had the best vocational value-added score.

Greenhead College principal Anton McGrath said: “We are very pleased — the one thing we have tried to do is make sure horizons for our wide range of learners are as broad as possible.”

At the other end of the scale, St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College in London came bottom for value-added on A-level courses while Leeds-based Notre Dame Sixth Form College was last for vocational value-added scores.

St Francis Xavier principal Stella Flannery described the value-added measure, which had been included in last year’s data, as “unproven and untested” and said the figures represented 21 per cent of the overall student cohort. She added: “We are concerned that this measure is being used in isolation.”

Notre Dame Sixth Form College principal Terry Coen said he was “concerned” by the result but vocational qualifications were only a “small part” of the college’s offer which it hoped to develop into “rigorous qualifications”.

Among the bottom value-added scores for GFE and tertiary colleges were County Durham’s Derwentside College for its vocational provision and Central Bedfordshire College for A-level provision.

A Central Bedfordshire College spokesperson said the college no longer offered A-levels.

For average points, the bottom scorers for A-levels were Doncaster College and Gateway Sixth Form College, and for vocational figures were Barrow-in-Furness and Derwentside College.

Principal of Barrow Sixth Form David Batten said the data did “not represent a true picture” of students’ progress as the data was based on learner birth dates, meaning some learners who had completed were excluded, while others were only half way through their course.

“This clearly means that the figure cannot be used to make valid comparisons,” he said.

No one from Cardinal Newman, Derwentside College, Doncaster College or Gateway Sixth Form College was available for comment.

## Most UTCs and studio schools miss targets

A majority of studio schools and University Technical Colleges (UTCs) failed to meet the government’s minimum GCSE achievement target according to league tables.

Of the 17 studio schools and UTCs for which data was available, 14 fell below the government “floor” of 40 per cent of learners achieving five A\* to C grade GCSEs including English and maths.

The tables included figures for UTCs and studio schools which opened in 2012 or earlier — so at least one cohort has completed a GCSE cycle.

League tables came under fire this year after thousands of vocational and GCSE alternative qualifications were disqualified from the data.

This could have worsened results for UTCs and studio schools, as students could have performed well, albeit in vocational subjects excluded from league tables.

Of the dozen studio schools listed, only Bournemouth-based Leaf Studio met the target, with 49 per cent of students gaining the five GCSEs.

This was followed by Midland Studio College Hinckley with 34 per cent, Stephenson Studio School (30 per cent), Bradford Studio School (24 per cent), Da Vinci Studio School of Science and Engineering (21 per cent), Barnfield Business and Enterprise Studio (17 per cent) and Parkside Studio College (16 per cent).

Next came Inspire Enterprise Academy (10 per cent), Hull Studio School (6 per cent), Stoke Studio College for Construction and Building Excellence (4 per cent), Tendring Enterprise Studio School (1 per cent) and Kajans Hospitality and Catering Studio College (0 per cent).

Among UTCs, three of five failed to meet the minimum — Visions Learning Trust UTC (0 per cent), Black Country UTC (21 per cent) and Hackney UTC (29 per cent).

Only Aston University Engineering Academy (52 per cent) and JCB Academy (65 per cent) exceeded the target.

Conversely, most Studio Schools and UTCs performed well at post-16, with highest ranking Central Bedfordshire UTC scoring an A-level average points score of 766.7 — on a par with top performing general FE and tertiary colleges, and the lowest score — for Da Vinci Studio School of Science and Engineering — was well above the lowest-scoring general FE and tertiary colleges at 530.7.

In 16 to 18 vocational education Aston University Engineering Academy came top of the league, scoring higher than the top performing general FE and tertiary colleges with 835.1.

However, UTC Reading gained a post-16 vocational average points score of just 299.6 — making it the second worst institution in the country for this measure.

No one from the Baker Dearing Trust, which oversees UTCs, the Studio Schools Trust or UTC Reading was available for comment.

## RESEARCH ON CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

The Further Education Trust for Leadership (Fetl) last week unveiled the four winners of its first wave of fellowship grants, worth up to £40,000 each to fund research into FE leadership issues. Reporter Paul Offord spoke to Cornwall College Group’s Ruth Allen (pictured) in the second of four *FE Week* articles focusing on the chosen fellows.

The lack of “time to think” for increasingly embattled FE staff is an issue that Ruth Allen fears is stifling the ability of providers to cope with policy changes and funding cuts.

It is why the Fetl fellow, who joined Cornwall College Group in 2007 as a business research unit assistant, has decided to focus her research on ‘leadership strategies which foster a creative culture in FE’.

Miss Allen, who was appointed higher education development manager in 2011 and promoted to development manager for the entire group in September, aims to identify a set of ‘creativity indicators’ allowing organisations to work out how to engage staff in creative thinking and measure its impact.

She said: “A lot of people, from principals to lecturers, have had to take on more work and responsibility as roles in FE are streamlined and they’ve lost the time to think.

“The challenge now is to think ‘how as an organisation can we still allow people to think creatively?’

“Embracing activities that give space for thinking can reduce anxiety and stress among individual staff and release their potential for creativity.

“There are also a multitude of benefits for wider organisations, from new product development to improved operational practices.

“Creative thinking allows providers to take a lead over what is happening to them, whether that’s less funding or regulation changes.”

Mark Ravenhall, Fetl chief executive, said: “Creativity is an important aspect of FE leadership. This research project should give us practical hints as to what works best and how providers best adapt in uncertain times.”





# LEARNER NEEDS TOP IN FUNCTIONAL SKILLS REVAMP

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Learner needs for “frequent retakes” need to be taken into account amid Ofqual-recommended improvements to Functional Skills, Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) chief executive Stephen Wright (pictured right) has warned.

He welcomed the qualification watchdog’s plan to make Functional Skills “more relevant and more reliable” and said “FAB is supportive of the drive to increase the quality and value of functional skills”.

Mr Wright told *FE Week*: “In moving forward with this work we feel it will be important to maintain a clear focus on the intended purpose of Functional Skills and the needs of the range of learners who use them to evidence their literacy, numeracy and IT skills. It will also be necessary to ensure that the features most frequently identified by stakeholders as being important, such as frequent opportunities to take the tests and prompt delivery of results, continue to be evident in any improved approach.”

The improvement plan, issued on January 27, followed an Ofqual review launched last year of level two English and maths Functional Skills.

The report, entitled Improving Functional Skills Qualifications, said



awarding organisations (AOs) had already responded “positively” to findings that the quality of assessment materials needed to be improved and the risk of malpractice and maladministration reduced.

The report also said AOs needed to strengthen standard-setting procedures and evaluate better how far qualifications were meeting user needs.

Jeremy Benson, Ofqual executive director for vocational qualifications, said he expected



## WorldSkills UK Brazil job for Peter

The boss of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Education Funding Agency has been handed the enviable task of representing the UK at WorldSkills in Brazil this summer.

Peter Lauener, chief executive of both funding agencies, will be taking over the role of official UK delegate to the WorldSkills 2015 competition in Brazil. He replaces former SFA interim chief executive Keith Smith, who returned full-time to his director’s role over funding and programmes.

Mr Lauener said he was “pleased” to be attending the event, where young people from around the world will compete for gold, silver and bronze in a huge range of vocational skills. “I will be personally championing the need for and value of skills training,” he told *FE Week*.

improvements to make Functional Skills “more relevant and more reliable”.

Debbie Ribchester (pictured left), senior policy manager at the Association of Colleges, said: “We are pleased AOs are committed to act on Ofqual’s recommendations to ensure there is consistency of standards and will ensure the suggested improvements are made.”

Stewart Segal, Association of Employment and



Learning Providers chief executive, said: “More and more employers recognise functional skills and we need a period of stability to make these improvements effective.”

The Ofqual plan came out the day the Education and Training Foundation launched its review of teaching and accreditation — including Functional Skills — of non-GCSE maths and English for learners unable to reach D grade GCSE.



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# A sector in freefall? English

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The FE and skills sector is performing worse in Ofsted inspections this academic year than last year, *FE Week* research has uncovered.

The research shows the proportion of general FE and tertiary colleges inspected so far in 2014/15 and graded inadequate or told to improve is up 27 percentage points on last year, while the percentage of sixth form colleges and independent learning providers with grade three or four inspection results also increased.

Last year, 36 per cent of inspections across the sector resulted in providers being rated as inadequate or requires improvement — it stands at 66 per cent so far this year.

Of the 23 GFE colleges inspected so far this academic year, 66 per cent have been given grade three or four ratings, compared to 39 per cent in the whole of 2013/14.

So far, 9 per cent of GFE college inspections have resulted in an inadequate grading, compared to 5 per cent in 2013/14, and the percentage told they require improvement so far has more than doubled — from 26 per cent to 57 per cent.

But Gill Clipson, deputy chief executive at the Association of Colleges (AoC), defended her members, claiming increased pressure with higher numbers of learners needing to study English and maths qualifications as part of new study programmes was to blame.

“We know that the emphasis on foundation English and maths from Ofsted inspectors has been crucial in influencing final inspection outcomes this year,” she told *FE Week*.



Ofsted annual report 2013/2014



Gill Clipson

“Colleges are dealing with increased enrolments of young people who have failed to achieve grade A\* to C in English and maths GCSE after 11 years of schooling. There has been an average 47 per cent increase in maths enrolments alone.

“There has been some help from the government to recruit and train additional teachers in this area. We would like to see recognition of the capacity building that colleges are undertaking to respond to this challenge in Ofsted inspections.

“There is no quick fix to the maths and English challenge facing the whole education system, both today and in the future. The next government should work with employers in the public and private sector and colleges to develop new maths and English qualifications which are rigorous and related to the world of work.”

However, Ofsted director of FE and skills Lorna Fitzjohn told MPs on the House of Commons

Education Select Committee on

Wednesday (January 28) that she had seen an improvement in teaching and learning at colleges after focusing on it in recent years.

She said: “We have seen a clear impact, particularly on teaching and learning, over the last two years. We have said clearly that hasn’t been good enough within the sector. We are now seeing that clearly improved so I do think we are having an impact.

“We do see clearly there is a need for a very clear national strategy for FE. I agree there is lots of competition — a lack of collaboration in the sector.

“We have also said clearly in our annual report last year that there needs to be a better structure at local levels to make sure the range of provision is there to meet the needs of employers and

arrangement for those organisations to collaborate would I think improve the sector.”

Dr Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director, said: “It is important not to draw long-term conclusions about quality from a snapshot of recent inspections which are, after all, based on Ofsted’s usual assessment of risk. We are particularly pleased to see that Ofsted continues to view quality as a whole system issue, and agree that the performance of colleges cannot be looked at in isolation from the performance of schools or, indeed, the levels of support provided by employer organisations and local enterprise partnerships.”

The *FE Week* research also showed that of the five sixth form colleges inspected so far, just one had been rated good, while two required improvement and two others were inadequate. In



Lorna Fitzjohn

2013/14, 67 per cent of sixth form colleges inspected were good or outstanding.

Sixth Form Colleges’ Association deputy chief executive James Kewin said: “We still have a greater proportion (87 per cent) of good or outstanding institutions than any other sector and we have seen a lot of inspections over the past couple of years.

“I’m confident that the three sixth form colleges that have dropped a grade or two in recent inspections will bounce back as Joseph Chamberlain Sixth Form College has.”

And the proportion of independent learning providers rated inadequate or requiring improvement also increased, from 35 per cent of all providers inspected in 2013/14 to 54 per cent of the 44 providers inspected so far in 2014/15 — although the proportion rated outstanding also increased, from 4 per cent to

Stewart S

## INSPECTORS’ BUSINESS FOCUS ‘M

Association of Colleges chief executive Martin Doel (pictured) has called on Ofsted boss Sir Michael Wilshaw to ensure inspectors’ increasing focus on employer engagement is extended to all FE and skills providers.

Mr Doel said he was “pleased” Sir Michael wanted to look at the “economic responsiveness of colleges” — but that he “trusted” it would “apply to all providers of 16 to 18 and adult education”.

He also took a swipe at Ofsted’s “cadre of inspectors” in an echo of University and College Union (UCU) concerns about Sir Michael’s staff.

“We are pleased that the chief inspector is giving notice of greater focus on the economic responsiveness of colleges,” said Mr Doel.

“We trust that this increased scrutiny will apply to all providers of 16 to 18 and adult education.

and employer need is a complex matter.

“Like UCU we are concerned that the current cadre of Ofsted inspectors may not have the necessary expertise to exercise reliable judgements in this area.”

Ofsted chief inspector Sir Michael had told the House of Commons Education Select Committee on Wednesday that colleges not engaging effectively with employers risked failing their inspections.

He said: “We are going to be a lot more critical of the FE sector and colleges in particular if they’re not doing that. They will fail their inspection if they don’t do it.”

And when asked by Labour MP Alex Cunningham how he would respond to UCU claims of “serious flaws in the way Ofsted inspects colleges under the current inspection regime” and that Ofsted “appears to lack any empathy or understanding of FE”, Sir Michael said: “That’s a bit of a cheek. We’ve just said nice things about them for the first time in ages.”

Stewart Segal, Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) chief executive, said: “All training providers have to work closely with employers to deliver effective apprenticeship programmes and AELP continues to run support programmes for providers on employer engagement.”

The education committee hearing was called to discuss Ofsted’s 2013/14 annual report, which painted a mixed picture for



“Even more critically, it is essential that Ofsted works with the sector to identify ‘what good looks like’.

“Understanding labour market intelligence in a sophisticated way and relating this to student demand

### Key

Improved

Stayed same

Inspections started from August 1 and with subsequent r

Sixth form colleges (SFCs)	Date of inspection	Grade
Hartlepool Sixth Form College	23/9/14	4
King George V College	16/9/14	4
SEEVIC College	29/9/14	3
Newham Sixth Form College	15/9/14	3
Joseph Chamberlain Sixth Form College	16/9/14	2

General FE & tertiary colleges (GFE colleges)	Date of inspection	Grade	Date of previous inspection	Grade	+/-
Lambeth College	8/12/2014	3	18/3/2013	3	0
East Surrey College	9/12/2014	2	12/1/2009	2	0
Stockport College	8/12/2014	3	30/9/13	4	+1
Lowestoft College	2/12/14	3	10/6/13	3	0
New College Swindon	1/12/14	2	19/1/09	2	0
Barnfield College	17/11/14	4	23/4/12	3	-1
South Leicestershire College	24/11/14	2	10/6/13	3	+1
South Gloucestershire and Stroud College	17/11/14	2	NPI	N/A	N/A
Greenwich Community College	10/11/14	4	20/5/13	3	-1
Central College Nottingham	10/11/14	3	20/5/13	3	0
Huntingdon Regional College	17/11/14	3	4/6/13	3	0
Amersham and Wycombe College	3/11/14	3	3/6/13	3	0
City of Wolverhampton College	20/10/14	2	29/4/13	3	+1
Central Sussex College	20/10/14	3	22/4/13	3	0
Warrington Collegiate	20/10/14	3	18/10/10	2	-1
Epping Forest College	20/10/14	3	13/5/13	3	0
Walford and North Shropshire College	14/10/14	3	30/4/13	3	0
Waltham Forest College	13/10/14	3	13/5/13	3	0
Stafford College	6/10/14	3	15/4/13	3	0
Worthing College	7/10/14	3	23/4/13	3	0
Kingston Maurward College	30/9/14	2	30/4/13	3	+1
Strode College	23/9/14	1	1/10/08	2	+1
Bradford College	22/9/14	2	6/10/08	2	0

# n and maths take their toll

7 per cent.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said the results reflected a “challenging environment”.

He said: “This is a very small sample so it is dangerous to make too many assumptions but providers have had to manage through period of huge change with new programmes such as study programmes, traineeships, English and maths and apprenticeships at the same time as managing budget and funding rate cuts.

“Ofsted has recognised that with any new programmes, there is a period where providers adapt their delivery models. We need to work with Ofsted to ensure that this period of change is recognised in the inspections.”



## MUST BE FOR ALL'

FE and skills. It highlighted a rise in the proportion of good or outstanding providers while also pointing to one-in-six learners at less than good providers.

Sir Michael, in the report, also repeated calls in 2012/13’s annual report for greater employer engagement.

And Ofsted director of FE and skills Lorna Fitzjohn told the committee she wanted a new system to help colleges engage with smaller companies.

She said: “We see large employers, and even medium-size employers engaging, and colleges have had some success in that, but what there hasn’t been success in is engaging in small and medium employers within that. There has to be some kind of structure, some kind of brokerage to encourage them.”

She also spoke about English and maths, which have seen an increase in FE and skills learner numbers because of a requirement in study programmes that those without C grade or above GCSEs in the subjects should continue to study.

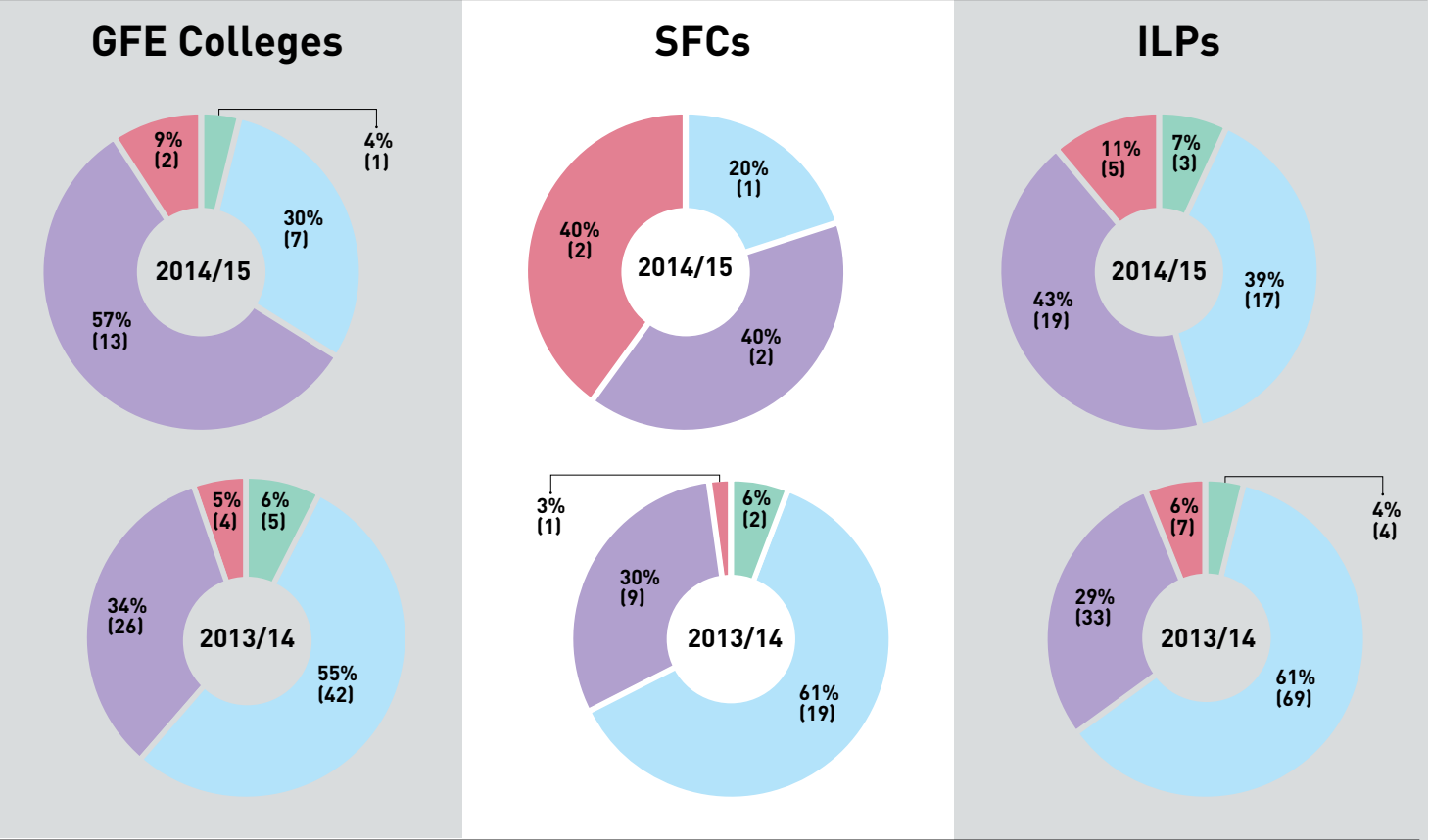
Ms Fitzjohn referred to one unnamed college she had visited where the number of English and maths learners had gone from 300 in 2013/14 to 2,000 this year.

Dr Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director, said: “Colleges are well aware that, with the focus of policy being firmly on English and maths and employer engagement, their work in these two areas will come under particular scrutiny this year.”

Got worse

Date of previous inspection	Grade	+/-
18/5/10	2	-2
19/3/12	2	-2
15/4/13	3	0
2/2/09	2	-1
16/4/13	3	+1

## FE AND SKILLS INSPECTIONS — THE TALE OF THE TAPE



Key	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	
Independent learning providers (ILPs)					
	Date of inspection	Grade	Date of previous inspection	Grade	+/-
Targeted Training Projects Limited	8/12/14	4	21/7/06	3	-1
Venture Learning Limited	1/12/14	4	13/1/09	1	-3
Four Counties Training Limited	1/12/14	4	5/2/08	1	-3
SBC Training Limited	8/12/14	3	6/7/10	2	-1
The Academy Hair & Beauty Ltd	9/12/14	1	12/1/08	1	0
Mainstream Training Limited	1/12/14	2	8/12/08	2	0
Strategic Training Solutions (Mansfield) Limited	2/12/14	3	25/6/13	3	0
Options 2 Workplace Learning Ltd	2/12/14	3	NPI	N/A	N/A
Expedient Training Services Limited	2/12/14	3	11/6/13	3	0
Barford Education and Training (North East) Limited	24/11/14	4	3/6/13	3	-1
GHQ Training Limited	17/11/14	2	22/11/11	2	0
Eco s Limited (Manchester Solutions)	24/11/14	3	25/6/12	2	-1
Rocket Training Limited	24/11/14	3	25/6/13	3	0
Brinsworth Training Limited	25/11/14	3	25/10/11	2	-1
Retail Motor Industry Training Limited	17/11/14	2	15/6/13	3	+1
In Touch Care Limited	10/11/14	3	13/5/13	2	-1
S.Y.T.G. Limited	11/11/14	2	14/5/13	3	+1
Norman Mackie & Associates Limited	10/11/14	2	NPI	N/A	N/A
CCP GRADUATE SCHOOL LTD	20/10/14	3	18/6/13	3	0
Bestland Solutions Limited	4/11/14	3	NPI	N/A	N/A
Team Enterprises Limited	27/10/14	3	3/5/11	2	-1
MI ComputoSolutions Incorporated	27/10/14	2	11/8/09	2	0
Skills Team Ltd	13/10/14	3	17/6/13	3	0
Succed Limited	27/10/14	3	NPI	N/A	N/A
Aspire Achieve Advance Limited	20/10/14	1	NPI	N/A	N/A
Woodspeen Training Limited	13/10/14	2	20/5/13	3	+1
Lawn Tennis Association Limited	6/10/14	1	10/11/08	2	+1
Matrix Training and Development Limited	14/10/14	2	14/1/08	2	0
Transplant Training Limited	30/9/14	3	NPI	N/A	N/A
TQ Workforce Development Limited	29/9/14	2	3/6/13	3	+1
Acacia Training Limited	29/9/14	3	15/4/13	3	0
The Learning Partnership for Cornwall and The Isles of Scilly Limited	16/9/14	3	NPI	N/A	N/A
Skills for Security Limited	22/9/14	3	22/6/13	3	0
JBC Computer Training Limited	17/9/14	2	NPI	N/A	N/A
Unique Training North East Limited	9/9/14	3	9/7/13	3	0
Career Development Center Limited	11/8/14	4	20/8/12	3	-1
Enlightenment Partnership Limited	18/8/14	2	26/11/12	3	+1
TheLightbulb Ltd	18/8/14	3	20/7/10	2	-1
5 E Ltd.	4/8/14	2	16/9/08	1	-1
Cheynes Training	18/8/14	2	18/2/13	3	+1
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry	18/8/14	2	7/3/11	2	0
Prevista Ltd	4/8/14	2	14/1/14	4	+2
Rewards Training Recruitment Consultancy Limited	4/8/14	2	9/7/12	3	+1
TCV Employment & Training Services	5/8/14	2	6/8/12	3	+1



FE WEEK COMMENT

Never forgetting white elephant

Learners find it hard to get to and it's not suitable for the provision to which it plays host — it's got more than a hint of one of those 'you couldn't make it up' stories.

But West Cheshire College is looking to close its expensive white elephant in Chester in a process that will be overseen by two members of FE Commissioner Dr David Collins' staff in case it's too important to shut.

If only such oversight had been in place when the rebuild plans were being drawn up — instead, oversights of the negative kind on transport and facilities have left the college in a precarious financial position.

As the sector prepares for the much-expected funding cuts heading its way, this is a timely reminder that the worst of the financial problems may just be behind you rather than in front as borrowing of yesteryear bites back with a vengeance.

If there's a lesson to be learned, something that should never forgotten, it's don't borrow what you can't afford to pay back. Or more specifically, don't borrow against what your learners can't afford to lose.

Designs on The Voice

Dan Duke was our head designer not too long ago, and he made it through the first heats of BBC's The Voice talent show at the end of last month.

All here at *FE Week* would like to wish him all the very best in round two.

Chris Henwood

chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk



TOP OFSTED ED COMMITTEE TWEETS

- @emfec\_group:** Sir Wilshaw says #apprenticeships only work when employers are engaged #edsele
- @joelmullan:** Spot on from Ofsted's Michael Wilshaw: 'Colleges that don't engage with businesses will fail'
- @SCHOOLSNE:** Ofsted's @HarfordSean tells @CommonsEd that careers education has not been given a high enough profile & is critical #FutureReady
- @AoC\_info:** Michael Wilshaw would welcome the idea of an 'inspectors inspection' to drive up standards in schools and colleges
- @chrisfyfehome:** @FCDWhittaker @LFitzjohnOfsted so why does DfE make all FE students who have not passed GCSE Maths and English retake it?



Threefold increase in sixth form college commissioner visits

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A threefold increase in the number of inspections by Sixth Form College Commissioner Peter Mucklow (pictured front) this academic year is likely to get worse, Sixth Form Colleges' Association chief executive David Igoe has warned.

Mr Mucklow was sent to just one college in 2013/14 — his first year in the job. But with six months of the current academic year still to run he has already carried out three inspections.

Mr Igoe told *FE Week*: "We are aware of the increase in visits and expect this trend to continue. Most sixth form colleges are coping well with funding cuts, but it is inevitable that more and more will experience financial problems and trigger commissioner visits."

Mr Mucklow inspected 995-learner Hartlepool Sixth Form College on January 22 following its inadequate Ofsted rating in November.

He visited 1,075-learner King George V College (KGV), in Merseyside, a month

after its inadequate grade was published in November last year.

And he had inspected 4,602-learner Totton College, in Hampshire, in October, which was deemed by Ofsted to require improvement in March, after concerns were raised about a lack of improvement since being issued with a financial notice to improve.

Meanwhile, his 2013/14 inspection of 2,180-learner Prior Pursglove College, in Guisborough, in February was triggered by an inadequate-overall Ofsted report published the same month.

"Poor Ofsted results are also often related to funding. When a college is expending all its energy on balancing the books, it is easy to take your eye off the ball with quality of learning," said Mr Igoe.

The Department for Education (DfE) declined to comment on the increased number of inspections.

However, a spokesperson said a report on Hartlepool college would be "published in due course" by the commissioner.

She added: "A number of recommendations have been made to improve outcomes

at KGV and the Education Funding Agency is working with the college on its implementation of them."

The commissioner's report on KGV raised concerns about teaching and learner progress and called for the recruitment of a senior vice principal from outside the college with proven experience in improving teaching and assessment for 16 to 19-year-olds.

A KGV spokesperson said: "KGV is acting on Ofsted's recommendations to improve the college."

The senior leadership team has produced an action plan [submitted to DfE last month] on the steps needed to achieve this."

A spokesperson for Hartlepool college said: "The visit was positive. Mr Mucklow and his team were very supportive and helpful."

A Totton College spokesperson said: "More and more colleges are being given a financial notice to improve and this reflects the challenging times for the FE sector."

Judy Burton, principal of Prior Pursglove College, said: "We have made significant progress since the commissioner's visit."

COMMENTS

**AoC hits back at ex-Ofsted director's claim colleges are 'frankly, rubbish'**  
[feweek.co.uk]

Having taught, managed and inspected in the FE system for my whole life and seeing still today the positive impact on those who have been failed by schools and political advisers (who advocate continual tampering rather than sticking with something and getting it right), I am going to treat the unsubstantiated and wildly general quotes made with what they deserve and not give them any further oxygen of publicity.

Phil Hatton

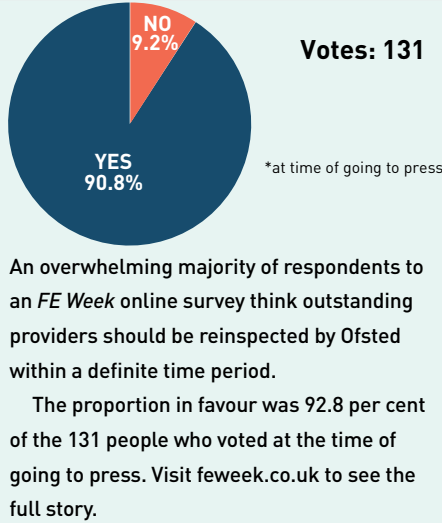
From my own experience, the challenges facing those identified as NEETS will be better addressed when college managers treat these young people and their teachers as seriously as they would pursue Foundation Degree awarding powers.

If you want the best outcomes, then provide the best resources.

I feel that many programs provided for NEETS and those at risk of becoming NEET are regarded as funding streams rather than remedial programs designed to overcome the lack of success within the state education sector.

Paul Smithers

VOTE RESULTS



Dear

Dr Sue

Email [DrSue@feweek.co.uk](mailto:DrSue@feweek.co.uk) for help from sector agony aunt Sue Pember on the third Monday of every month. The best question wins a £100 Amazon gift card



# Principals on board with voting principle

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College principals have been enlisted in the effort to register learners to vote in May’s general election.

The Electoral Commission, which oversees elections in the UK, has joined forces with the National Union of Students (NUS) and the Association of Colleges (AoC) as well as higher education bodies in the campaign.

They have written to college principals and university chancellors asking them to raise awareness among students via emails, poster campaigns and campus registration drives.

Martin Doel, AoC chief executive, said: “The next government will be making crucial decisions that will affect everyone’s future — as well as the next generation in education.

“It’s important everyone has their say at this summer’s election which is why we’d like to see colleges and other institutions to encourage their students to register to vote.”

A similar effort to get learners voting took place at Croydon College last month with a visit and talk by Lady Doreen Lawrence OBE — the mother of Stephen Lawrence, the teenager murdered in a racist attack in east London in 1993.

She spoke to students



Lady Doreen Lawrence OBE (centre right, in grey top) at Croydon College

from across all subject areas after taking a tour of the grounds. Business student Kediashia Kay, aged 17, said: “She was inspirational. The session was a real eye-opener — to understand how important one vote can be, and that one person can make such a huge difference.” Principal Frances Wadsworth said: “The session was about being able to show students that one person can make a difference, and whether they vote Conservative, Labour or whatever — they will have taken part in an important democratic process that

will, whatever the outcome, affect their lives.”

And recently colleges have been getting visits from politicians, including Shadow Skills Minister Liam Byrne at London’s Newham Sixth Form College (NewVIC) and Seevic College in Essex, while Skills Minister Nick Boles has been to London’s City Lit and Somerset College has played host to Lib Dem leader Nick Boles.

Toni Pearce, NUS president, said: “At a time when many feel that politics isn’t relevant to them, we need to do everything we can to encourage young people to take part in democracy. Students hold the key to the next general election, registering to vote is a step closer to making



From left: Lib Dem parliamentary candidate for Taunton Deane Rachel Gilmour, Nick Clegg and Somerset College principal Rachel Davies

sure they use it.”

Commission chair Jenny Watson said academic institutions were “in a unique position to directly contact” students. “We hope that as many academic institutions as possible will support our efforts to get students registered,” she said.



Nick Boles with City Lit principal Mark Malcolmson



See page 12 to read the FE Insider tackling general election issues.



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We had to have half the Bay City Rollers, and they were absolutely terrible

## PUTTING FE ON THE TABLE

@REBECCAKCOONEY  
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The political career of Tim Farron MP, former education and skills select committee member and now president of the Liberal Democrats, didn't get off to the most auspicious start.

His first elected role, as president of Newcastle University student union, culminated in him spending the graduation ball under a table.

"I was very close to signing Duran Duran for the ball, which would have been epic," he says, his face lighting up at the prospect.

"But our students' union was very party political and the treasurer, who was Labour, refused to sign the cheque, because it was me.

"In the end, we had to have half the Bay City Rollers, and they were absolutely terrible.

"I had to hide under one of the tables because people were so angry. It was just shocking."

Despite this, the father-of-four describes the presidency as "the second best job I've

ever had" — after his current role as MP for Westmorland and Lonsdale.

Farron, now aged 44, traces his love of music back to his father, Chris.

"I'm very proud of my dad for many reasons," he says.

"Not least because, although he worked in a regular 9 to 5 job in the building trade, on a Friday and a Saturday night he was DJ Chris Farron with his Wheels of Steel."

Farron was in a band of his own between the ages of 16 and 24, but refuses to tell me the name on the grounds video evidence has made its way on to YouTube.

"I'm desperate nobody ever sees it," he says. "We were once described as a 'fourth-rate New Order' by the only write-up we ever got, and I'm quite proud of that, as it's pretty accurate."

So while his father's influence was musical, his politics bear the stamp of his mother, Sue, who died from ovarian cancer in 2004.

They separated when Farron was five, and as a single parent to him and his older sister, Jo, she took on part-time jobs as a librarian and a retail assistant before going on to

secretarial college and eventually university, to study a business degree.

"She's quite a hero of mine, my mum, and probably her politics rubbed off on me," says Farron. "She was absolutely liberal and tolerant in her outlook.

"I have two women to thank for my politics — my mum and Margaret Thatcher — one was a positive and one was a negative influence."

However, Farron is cautious about pinning down an exact moment he developed his own interest in politics.

"When I was 14, I saw a re-run of Cathy Come Home and it made me cry.

"So I spent my £1.50 pocket money, that I had been going to buy a Smiths single with that weekend, on joining Shelter and that did politicise me."

Farron studied A-levels, and opted to take them in FE at Runshaw College rather than the local grammar school's sixth form.

"A lot of my mates didn't do A-levels, they did BTecs and the equivalent of the apprenticeship scheme," he explains.

"And actually from what I can tell it was at

least as challenging as what I was doing and actually quite a lot more practical."

This experience left him impatient with academic "snobbery".

"The gap between vocational and academic is a really false one, it holds Britain back, and it's not right," he says. "I don't like the notion that you've got to choose one or the other."

It was a view that Farron took with him in 2005 to the House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee (which has since become the Education Select Committee).

"One of the things I remember working on quite a bit was the notion that you would try to make sure that kids of all ability groups have an engagement with the vocational and with the



Farron campaigning in the 2005 election





It's a personal thing

**What is your favourite book, and why?**  
War of the Worlds by HG Wells. My mother had the prog rock double album of it from the 1970s, which used to terrify the living daylights out of me when I was about eight or nine and eventually I read the book. What I love is the clash between the minute and the personal with the vast and the galactic, and that it's obviously written at the back end of the 19th Century, and it's imagining a technology that we can't even imagine now. And in the end it's all about how human beings react to hideous events

**What do you do to switch off from work?**  
I read books and play my kids on Fifa on the computer. Annoyingly, my eight-year-old is brilliant at it and I can't beat him. I can beat my 11-year-old and the 13-year-old. I walk and I run through the woods above Morecambe Bay in the village I live. I'm a pop music anorak, so I spend some time indulging in that, and I support Blackburn Rovers but I don't really relax doing that

**What's your pet hate?**  
Insincerity — I dislike it intensely. You see a lot of transparent fakery in the media and in politics, and because I'm sure I'm tempted by it as well, I definitely know it when I see it. It just makes me nauseous. I think authenticity is really important

**If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?**  
I would have Paddy McAloon [from 80s pop group Prefab Sprout] who I consider to be the greatest living English language poet on the planet. But he wouldn't want to be invited to my house for dinner because it would be sickening, as I would just ask him all sorts of pathetic, fawning questions. I'd also have [author] CS Lewis there. I think he's just a fascinating character. And Johnny Rotten

**What did you want to be when you grew up?**  
I would have liked to be a footballer, and then I wanted to be in a band

From left: Farron's wife Rosie, sons Jude and Laurie, Farron and daughter Grace.



From left: Farron's son Jude, Farron, daughter Grace, son Laurie and wife Rosie

Farron graduating from Newcastle University in 1992



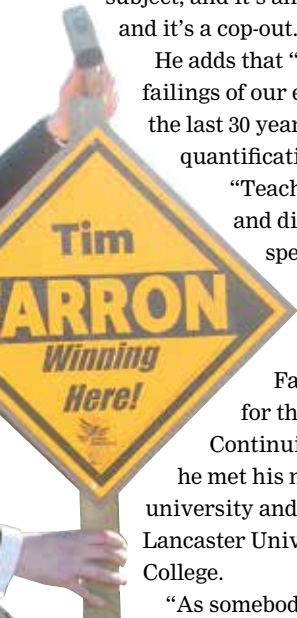
From left: Farron's wife Rosie with son Laurie and Farron with daughter Rosie

world of work, (a) because that's right, and (b) because it's really important you don't send out a message that only kids at the lower end of achievement levels are directed towards vocational study," he says. "It's an insult to them and it's an insult to the subject, and it's an insult to FE actually, and it's a cop-out."

He adds that "one of the great failings of our education system over the last 30 years has been excessive quantification and assessment".

"Teachers of various kinds and different ages and stages spend their time focusing on the test and not on educating a rounded individual," says Farron, who worked for the Department for Continuing Education, where he met his now-wife Rosie, after university and then had posts at Lancaster University and St Martin's College.

"As somebody in adult education



for four years, and later ending up on the education select committee looking at adult education, I've been very keen to try to press government to think that sometimes you just have to trust that it's the right thing to do — not expect some expensive and often pointless process of having to quantify and certificate everything."

Despite falling off the education committee radar, having served just 10 months as a member, Farron is nevertheless very much on the party leadership radar as one of the names tipped to replace Nick Clegg should he step down after the general election.

However, Farron politely but firmly refuses to be drawn on the issue.

"I think in the end, we may never have been more important or more significant — but we have also never been more under threat," he says.

"Anyone giving too much headspace to what happens after May is probably foolish and certainly very selfish.

"Nick is a good leader and a very decent man, and he deserves to have people backing him, not speculating on what happens in any

"You're up against a whole bunch of civil servants who, bless them, don't 'get' FE, because they are all Oxbridge-educated, and often privately-educated before that"

future environment."

But waiting for the right opportunity is nothing new for Farron. He ran for Parliament several times — the first when he was just 22, in the North West Durham constituency, although this, he says, was mostly so the Lib Dems had someone to put on the ballot paper.

But it wasn't until his fourth time, in 2005,

that he won the seat, by 267 votes, which, he says, was "marvellous".

"So I am being paid to do my hobby and it's important to recognise that," he says.

Of course, since 2010, being a Liberal Democrat MP has been anything but plain sailing, but he defends the party's record in Government, pointing to Business Secretary Vince Cable's claims to have defended FE at the expense of higher education during coalition talks.

"There was a lot of moving money from the FE column to the higher education column, so although there have been cuts, it's not the hideous cuts there would have been," he says.

"And when you're up against a whole bunch of civil servants who, bless them, don't 'get' FE, because they are all Oxbridge-educated, and often privately-educated before that, and it was a counter-intuitive and counter-cultural thing for a minister to step in and say, 'What about FE?'"

"But it's a real battle, and the thing is, FE is vital and we need to treat it a bit more like it is vital."





**FE INSIDER**

Shane Chowen is head of policy & public affairs at Niace and a governor at Westminster Kingsway College. He is also a former Institute for Learning policy officer and ex-vice president of the National Union of Students. His exclusive FE Insider column features in the first *FE Week* of every month.



**LISA O'LOUGHLIN**

Principal, The Manchester College

# A look back with the general election looming

“A week is a long time in politics,” were famous words from Labour Prime Minister of the 1960s and 70s Harold Wilson. It stands to reason then, that a full five-year Parliament feels like a lifetime. You might already be sick of the general election — the ‘costed spending commitments’, ‘the other lot have got their sums wrong’, and ‘yes but look, Ed Miliband lol.”

How much longer do we have to wait before UKIP leader Nigel Farage gets a photo op at a college hair salon, or a college bar? Perhaps an English for Speakers of Other Languages class?

There’s never a dull moment in FE, goes the most overused sector cliché, and a lot has happened since our 2010 general election.

The parliament started with a re-emergence of mass student protests in London over education cuts and increases in university tuition fees (‘24+ Advanced Learning Loans’ was too hard to fit on to placards and has too many syllables to rhyme well).

We saw college students organise days of action opposing the abolition of Education Maintenance Allow-ance — even principals were getting involved.

Plans to devolve planning of 19+ FE to Regional Development Agencies were scrapped, and then Regional Development Agencies were scrapped. We had a ‘bonfire of the quangos’ in the public sector and the ‘big society’ to clear it up.

Some of what we do now is funded through a new loans system, which hasn’t had the desired impact, and is potentially about to be expanded.

Then there was the higher education white paper that never happened, complete overhaul of the state school system and curriculum and an increase in 19+ apprenticeships to the tune of around 203,000.

Even though we know that the next five years are going to be just as, if not more, difficult than the last five, there are some things I think we can learn and look out for.

Deciding to deal with university tuition fees so early in the parliament was a strategic move. It meant that an entire cohort of undergraduates could enrol and graduate under the new system and gave enough time to describe the fees increase as a success in terms of not negatively impacting on admissions of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Fantastic as it is to sugarcoat participation in this way, the unfortunate core of this

political Smartie is that part-time and mature students have taken the brunt as the number of adults in learning continues to fall sharply.

We know already that no matter who makes up the next government, there’s even less money to go around.

**We know already that no matter who makes up the next government, there’s even less money to go around**

Both of our core government departments will have a tough time balancing the books; the Department for Education with its forecasted funding shortfall of £4.6bn to accommodate increasing pupil numbers and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills’s expensive system of student loans coupled with its vulnerability as a government department without a ring fence.

Something pretty drastic needs to happen; redressing inequalities in schools, FE and higher education would be a good start, but could go even further by properly linking together pre and unemployment services too.

Now if all of that sounds like a lot, picture FE in the entirety of public policy and the massive changes we’ve seen across the board in just five years.

There’s no way the *FE Week* editor will give me the word count to go through all of it, so I’ll end with a relevant and necessary call to action.

Thursday (February 5) is National Voter Registration Day (NVRD). FE has access to people of all ages and stages, learners and staff, and the outcome of the next election matters to every single one of us.

Registering to vote has never been easier. It can now be done online and Bite The Ballot has some free downloadable resources which would look great on your VLE. #NVRD

## Getting ‘stuck in’ to skills devolution

Chancellor George Osborne and the leaders of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) signed **The Greater Manchester Agreement in November. The devolution agreement, and its impact on the region’s FE and skills budget, is assessed by Lisa O’Loughlin.**

From the Government’s point of view, The Greater Manchester Agreement is a major step towards creating a “Northern Powerhouse”, and it has stressed that the deal includes Greater Manchester having its own directly-elected Mayor with powers over transport, planning, policing and skills.

The proposals also include devolving further powers to the GMCA over support for business growth, skills and joined-up health and social care budgets.

This agreement is not based on the same model as London. There will be a transition period of about two years and then, when legislation is passed and direct elections, which are scheduled for 2017, take place the scope of the Mayor’s powers will be more extensive than in the capital, covering policing and other social issues.

**It is up to The Manchester College, and all of Greater Manchester’s skills providers, to get stuck in**

But, at the same time, in recognition of the 10 areas and their local authorities in GMCA, there will be a much more collegiate approach, with the Mayor working alongside each authority’s representatives. So it’s important to realise there will be powers that remain with the ten authorities combined into GMCA with the Mayor as an equal partner, and others that will be specifically for the Mayor.

The agreement means that the GMCA will, in effect, be a team of 11 rather than the existing 10, with the Mayor acting as leader and chair with a huge area of devolved powers and funding covering matters such as business support budgets, integration of health and social care across the city region, the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) and, crucially for us, the power and

funding to re-shape and re-structure FE provision in Greater Manchester.

Those powers and funding for skills will already be devolved to the GMCA during the transitional period, in which the Mayor will be appointed rather than directly elected.

This is recognition by the Government of Greater Manchester’s desire to shape skills provision to deliver the needs of its economy.

We are going to play our full part in working with GMCA and Whitehall to re-shape and re-structure skills provision within Greater Manchester so that a new, forward-looking skills system is in place by 2017, with FE and The Manchester College at its heart.

The college is well-placed to take full advantage of these new powers and devolved funding since we have already done a lot of work aligning our curriculum with the needs of employers.

GMCA will also assume responsibility for AGE which will enable the combined authority to refocus incentives or vary the level of financial support available to different types of learner, sizes of business and subject areas in apprenticeships, for example, according to local need.

We’ll be more able to respond to labour market need and economic priorities. There will be a recommissioning process led by GMCA and the Government (Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, Department for Education, Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency) which will identify the future shape and funding (including pricing of adult skills budget courses) of FE provision in the Greater Manchester city region.

We realise that any change needs to be cost neutral, but that’s OK — what matters is that the money is spent where it can make most impact on our employers’ and learners’ economic prospects.

The process started in December and will run throughout the 2015 Spending Review so that we can all start to deliver a revised curriculum offer from 2017.

It happened in GM first because of the foundations laid by long-standing and productive co-operation between the 10 local authorities, but there is no reason in principle that the same sort of agreement couldn’t be reached in other large city regions.

Devolution of powers and funding is something that wins support across the political spectrum, and it is up to The Manchester College, and all of Greater Manchester’s skills providers, to get stuck in and proactively make the new world work to the advantage of our economies and communities.



A legal change later this year will strengthen the rights of general FE college learners taking higher education courses. Smita Jamdar looks at areas where colleges’ have struggled.

In more than two decades of working with FE colleges, I have never been asked to advise on as many learner complaints as I am now. There are many reasons why this is, including, a greater awareness among learners of their legal rights, a greater investment by some learners in their own education and a greater willingness to challenge where expectations are not met are just some of them. There is also the strengthening of consumer rights that will hit the sector later this year when the Consumer Rights Act comes into force, bringing with it the powerful new remedies of a right to a repeat performance and a right to a discount. More colleges that deliver higher education will find themselves directly subject to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education. This will almost certainly continue the upward trend as far as learner complaints are concerned. The most common complaints I come across relate to, firstly, an alleged failure to deliver the programme as promoted. These complaints often arise when colleges are forced to make changes to the content or method of delivery or assessment, often because of circumstances outside their control. Perhaps recruitment has not been as expected or a key member of staff has departed. Perhaps promised placement



SMITA JAMDAR  
Partner and head of education,  
SGH Martineau LLP

## The resistible rise of learner complaints

opportunities have not materialized. Alternatively, the complaints might relate to dissatisfaction with the quality of what is on offer, whether that be the education itself, or the other facilities available. Avoiding these complaints depends largely on clarity, communication and commitment. Information about what learners can expect should be clear and comprehensive, including information on when and why things may change. Constant and open two-way communication with learners will identify at an early stage where things are going wrong, help to find swift solutions and prevent escalation. Commitment to the learners in terms of delivering what has been promised, putting their needs at the heart of decisions to change what has been offered to them, and in finding solutions that minimize the adverse impact on them when problems have arisen, will also keep complaints low in numbers and in acrimony. Secondly, perceived disability discrimination. Colleges are diverse communities and learners have the benefit of protection against discrimination on the

grounds of a range of protected characteristics. In terms of complaints, the most common characteristic cited in my experience is disability. Hidden disabilities, learning disabilities and mental ill-health feature highly. Colleges seem to struggle particularly in two respects: firstly, a failure to obtain enough information at an early enough stage to assess what needs a learner with disabilities might have and secondly, where appropriate, to consider and implement such adjustments as are reasonably necessary to allow the learner to access the educational and other services on offer. These complaints can be reduced or avoided by ensuring that staff at all levels of the organization have an appropriate level of understanding of the legal obligations towards learners with disabilities to enable them to either refer the matter on within the organization or themselves reach defensible decisions on what to do. Dissemination of relevant and specific information about individual students’ disability-related needs to teaching and

other staff who engage with those students is important. And thirdly, challenges on the grounds that there has been a failure to deal fairly with learners. Based on my experience, college disciplinary and fitness to practise/study policies are being invoked more frequently, yet sometimes fail to observe even the most basic principles of fairness and natural justice.

In terms of complaints, the most common characteristic cited in my experience is disability

Common shortcomings include a failure properly to articulate the case the learner has to answer, a confusion of roles between investigator and decision-maker, and a failure to allow the learner to test the case against her by testing the evidence. There is every reason to suspect that learner complaints will increase in the years ahead. However, relatively simple steps to address the underlying issues will protect colleges against wasted management time and resource in trying to defend the sometimes indefensible or putting things right.



BARRY LORD-GAMBLES  
Contracts director, Venture Learning Limited

## Don’t leave it more than two years between inspections

Having been handed a disastrous ‘inadequate’ Ofsted grading nearly six years after the last visit resulted in ‘outstanding’ plaudits [see [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk)], Barry Lord-Gambles explains why he thinks all providers should be inspected every two years.

I have been involved in publicly-funded learning since 1984. I have been through a number of inspections for several companies both as a nominee and director and have always found them to be a challenging, but ultimately positive experience. The last inspection however was quite an eye opener and has left my company shaken, and stirred into making providers in the same position sit up and take note. I cannot emphasise enough the effect it had on my staff, learners and employers — many of whom I have worked with for more than 25 years. I was very disappointed during inspection

that success rates for the more up to date 2013/14 cohort were not taken into consideration, even though they were published a fortnight before the draft report was completed. They showed an increase from 69 per cent to 73 per cent. There was also no consideration given to the current estimated success rates for 2014/15, which stood at 83 per cent. During the inspection we were told many times by inspectors that many findings could be rectified very quickly and we would certainly be given an opportunity. This appears not to have been the case and again highlights the inequality between independent learning providers, and schools and FE colleges — both of which do not have their contracts automatically withdrawn, but are allowed to improve despite being put into special measures But maybe its security relies on an inspection lottery process that is not fit for purpose.

The subject specialist on our inspection worked for an outstanding lead provider not inspected since May 2006, and even then it was under the Adult Learning Inspectorate.

Mini inspections should include representatives from lead providers who have in the last 12 months been inspected and gained outstanding

Surely this cannot be right — it can’t rely on success rates and a well written self-assessment report. I believe all providers should be inspected at least every two years. To put this in context on the subject of safeguarding, since May 2006 in the news, we have had several high profile safeguarding cases including one very high profile paedophilia case that was able to fool everyone while apparently outwardly projecting an air of total respectability. These all came to light after the event and with hindsight could have been minimised if appropriate action was taken sooner. With such an emphasis at inspection on

safeguarding I think there may be a lesson there to be learned. I would suggest that mini inspections would ensure that providers can stay on track and keep up with current Ofsted thinking. I would suggest that these inspections should be part-inspection and part-support in training, guidance and sharing of good practice. These mini inspections should include representatives from lead providers who have in the last 12 months been inspected and gained outstanding. I also believe that the Ofsted events that I have recently attended could be improved by utilising representatives from inspiring providers who would be identified during these mini inspections who could share good practice. With the added pressures of trying to run a business and keep everyone— from subcontractors, learners, employers, employees, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Education Funding Agency and Ofsted — onside it is too easy to lose sight of what we are aiming to achieve. This is compounded by the lack of support from the SFA, which appears to be understaffed and quite often unavailable to answer queries we may have. As a lead provider trying to address the complexities of work-based training I feel that the challenges are becoming insurmountable. I feel very strongly that if the UK wants to maintain a first class apprenticeship model local providers like Venture Learning should be supported otherwise local knowledge, expertise and consistency will be lost.



# Auschwitz visit inspires learners' memorial plaque

The 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz was marked with a memorial event organised by learners who had visited the notorious concentration camp.

A plaque at Queen Alexandra Sixth Form College was unveiled as part of the event, overseen by North Tyneside mayor Norma Redfearn.

A-level learner Kaldyne Field, aged 17, said: "Going to Auschwitz is an experience I will never forget, it really hits home what went on there."

"The idea of the plaque came to us on the way home from Auschwitz, we wanted to do something that would be permanent, creating a place of remembrance for students and the wider community."

Coun Redfearn said: "The students have done an excellent job in commemorating the 70th anniversary and taking it upon themselves to educate other young people and their community."



From left: Queen Alexandra Sixth Form College history teacher Steven Driver with 17-year-old A-level learners Harry Smith, Kyran Brady, Kaldyne Field and Connor Burgess



From left: Dan Garner and Weston College plastering lecturer Barry Allford at work

## Plasterer Dan hoping for business success after old skills discovery

Weston College student who trained in plastering after being made redundant has launched his own business and discovered an ability in 16th Century skills.

Dan Garner, aged 32, recently completed his level two plastering diploma at the college's construction and engineering centre of excellence (CECE).

It was there that lecturers found his ability with the 500-year-old skill of pargetting, which uses plaster of Paris mixed with hemp to sculptural effect.

Father-of-three Dan, 32, said: "I was made redundant from a printing company and decided I wanted to work for myself."

"I found plastering easy and then discovered my niche with this creative work."

Plastering lecturer Barry Allford said: "I made a musical note on the wall and Dan then created a cherry blossom branch. I have not seen talent like this in all my years here."

# Determined fundraising leads to third charity challenge

A Gloucestershire College worker who has cerebral palsy takes on his third fundraising charity challenge this month, cycling 100 miles in a day in aid of the Mind mental health charity, writes Billy Camden.

A determined fundraiser from Gloucestershire College will embark on his toughest event yet when he aims to raise £200 for mental health charity Mind by cycling 100 miles in a day.

Helpdesk and booking clerk worker Owen Thomas, aged 26, who suffers limited mobility having been born with cerebral palsy in his legs, wants to travel the equivalent of 161 times around a velodrome on a static exercise bike at GC Gym, at the college's Cheltenham Campus.

He has previously walked from Gloucester to Stroud to raise money for the Brittle Bone Society and trekked 30.7 miles from Stroud to Gloucester to Tewkesbury in aid of Cancer Research UK.

And his latest effort is due to take place on February 16,

Owen Thomas working at Gloucestershire College



Owen Thomas

after enlisting the help of current students to design posters promoting the challenge.

"The college has been absolutely amazing, everyone has been incredibly supportive and aided me in getting a reach out there," he said.

"I've always said this isn't a personal publicity thing for me, it is about getting the right recognition for the charity and the college have been great in getting that message out to as many people as possible."

He added: "Each event I have done has escalated, I always aim to do more each time. I always want to set myself challenges and also send out the message that I don't get held back by my disability."

"I won't let it hold me back or dictate me." And Mind is a charity close to his heart.

"The charity is close to my beliefs. Some of my friends and family, as well as some of our most prominent visionaries and famous faces have suffered with depression, including Virginia Woolf, Stephen Fry and the late Robin Williams," said Owen.

"But depression is still seen as a taboo subject because of a lack of understanding and knowledge. My message is this: please don't be ashamed or scared to reach out and please seek help and advice."

"There are many people and charities like Mind that can help you."

He added: "I want to raise awareness for and dispel the myths surrounding an illness which affects so many people, and hope the

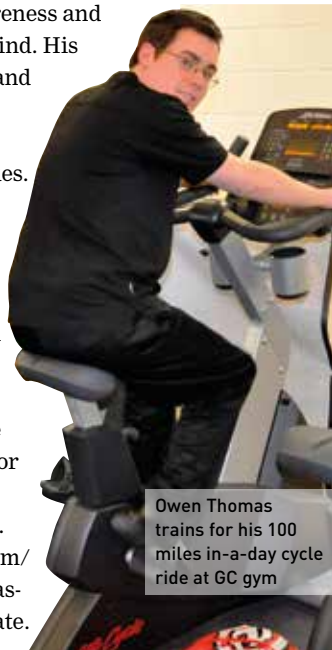
people of Gloucestershire will get behind me. If my cycling challenge inspires just one person to seek help, it will all be worth it."

Owen is himself a former student of Gloucestershire College, where he studied A-levels in history and English literature and language and retook his GCSE in maths.

Shelly McCatty, public relations and copywriting executive for Gloucestershire College, said: "We are all incredibly proud of Owen for taking on such a tough challenge to raise awareness and money for Mind. His enthusiasm and fundraising supports the college's values."

"We hope that people come along to cheer Owen on and donate to the cause, and wish him the best of luck for the big day."

Visit [www.justgiving.com/Owen-Thomas-Cycle](http://www.justgiving.com/Owen-Thomas-Cycle) to donate.



Owen Thomas trains for his 100 miles in-a-day cycle ride at GC gym

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Send your stories with pictures to [campus@feweek.co.uk](mailto:campus@feweek.co.uk) including names, ages and course details of students where applicable



# & MOVERS SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

Governors at 7,000-learner Stockport College have announced that Simon Andrews is to join them as their new principal.

He is currently in charge at 5,700-learner Macclesfield College and is due to join Stockport, which recently improved from an Ofsted grade four to three rating under interim principal Ian Clinton, in April.

Mr Andrews became Macclesfield principal in April 2012, at which point it was rated as inadequate by Ofsted. Just over a year after he had been in post it achieved a 'good' Ofsted rating.

"I am delighted to be joining Stockport College and am looking forward to the challenge of working with students and staff to continue on the improvements already made," he said.

He added: "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Macclesfield and will miss the warmth and friendliness of colleagues here. I recognise that behind every successful institution is a first class workforce and it's the quality

of the staff at Macclesfield that makes the difference."

Stockport governors' chair Louise Richardson said: "Simon comes with an excellent track record in leading college improvement. His experience will be invaluable."

She added: "I would like to take this opportunity also to put on record our thanks to Ian Clinton, for his strong and visible leadership since February that has resulted in our improvements so far and am very pleased that he will be staying with us until Simon is able to join us, to achieve a smooth transition."

Anne Thomson, Macclesfield College corporation chair, said: "I want to extend my thanks to Simon, on behalf of the governing body, for his hard work and service over the last five years.

"Simon was first appointed to the role of our deputy principal and then moved on to acting principal in April 2012 and, finally, principal that summer.



Simon Andrews



Diane Grannell



Lynne Sedgmore

She added: "As a governing body, we wish him every success in his future career."

Meanwhile, Diane Grannell will be the next principal at Bournemouth & Poole College. She is currently its vice principal for finance and planning.

She is due to take over from current principal Lawrence Vincent in September, following his retirement at the end of the academic year.

Ms Grannell, who has worked at the college since 2006, said: "Dorset is a very special place and this is a unique and exciting opportunity to lead the college."

She added: "I'm looking forward to continuing to work in close partnership with the other education leaders in the county and beyond, and to continue to forge stronger, effective working links with local employers and our community partners."

Joy Postings, governors' chair, said: "The interview process was deliberately rigorous involving our staff, governors, students, employers and key stakeholders from across the region.

She added: "I'm delighted that following such an intensive process we have been able to make an appointment from within."

And Dr Lynne Sedgmore CBE, executive director of the 157 Group, has been named as one of the UK's most influential people in the 2015 Debrett's 500 list.

Dr Sedgmore said: "It is a great honour to be included in such a prestigious list, and I am particularly delighted with the recognition for FE, which is all too often overlooked."

To let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, independent learning provider, awarding organisation or other sector body email [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk)

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# Principal & Chief Executive

## Competitive salary

Peterborough Regional College is a highly successful College playing a key educational leadership role in the region. Currently rated as 'Good with outstanding features' by Ofsted, we are ideally positioned to reach 'Outstanding'. We are immensely proud of the achievements of our students, our dedicated staff team and our partners. With around 11,000 students, c750 staff and a turnover of c£27m, Peterborough Regional College is strongly placed to continue moving forward with confidence. The new UTC opening in September 2015 and the University Centre, both on the College's campus, will ensure Peterborough Regional College continues to be at the heart of the educational landscape in Peterborough.

We now seek to appoint a new leader for the College to ensure that we remain positioned to meet the challenges of a dynamic sector. An outstanding communicator, the successful candidate will bring imagination, commercial acumen, a creative and innovative approach and a positive, entrepreneurial attitude. The incoming Principal will build on our strong and diverse range of external stakeholders and position Peterborough Regional College as a key partner across our region. With experience of building partnerships and making strategic goals an economic and financial reality, you will bring substantial leadership skills and the ability to maximise the potential of Peterborough Regional College.

You must bring a passion for working with young people and inspiring a new generation and an exceptional track record of leadership and management.

This role presents an outstanding opportunity for an individual with ambition, drive and vision to lead a highly successful and progressive College.

To find out more, please visit [www.peterboroughleadership.com](http://www.peterboroughleadership.com) or call our advising consultants at GatenbySanderson, **Paul Aristides** on **020 7426 3987** or **Elliott Rae** on **020 7426 3964** for a confidential discussion.

**Closing date: 23 February 2015**

**Final Panel interviews: 13 & 14 April 2015**

GatenbySanderson



## Quality Quality Lead (Workplace Teaching, Learning & Assessment)

Grade: £25,007 - £26,535 (Subject to JE)  
Location: Home based with regional travel



We are seeking to appoint two new members of staff to our quality team who will undertake the observation of workplace teaching learning, and assessment, along with other activities that will support the continuous improvement of our learning programmes. The positions are available on a full or a part time basis (i.e. five, four or three days per week pro rata), whilst for the right candidate we may also be prepared to consider a 'term time only' contract. The holiday entitlement will be 27 days plus bank holidays per annum, pro rata if part-time.

**POST 1(Northern / Central): Due to the expected area of travel you should ideally live within a Northern English county (e.g. Yorkshire, Lancashire, etc.).**

**POST 2 (Southern / central): Due to the expected area of travel you should ideally live within one of the counties surrounding the M4 corridor.**

Successful applicants will be proficient practitioners who have recent experience within the delivery of Apprenticeship programmes (e.g. undertaking workplace training and assessment), or they will have held a role that involves the observation of such practice. Individuals must recent experience in this type of position. We particularly welcome applications from candidates who are currently working as a workplace 'Assessor or Trainer', but are now looking for the next step in their career progression.

You must possess excellent communication and organisational skills, and have a positive approach to providing high quality customer service, whilst the ability to work flexibly is essential.

Successful candidates will be required to demonstrate their commitment to the College values: serving our students and community, professionalism, respect for other people and teamwork, caring, honesty and integrity and a positive "can-do" approach.

The College provides excellent Continuous Professional Development opportunities including support to acquire professional qualifications and gain essential job related training. We also offer competitive conditions of service including eligibility to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria are guaranteed an interview. We celebrate diversity and welcome applications from everyone regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, faith or disability.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, vulnerable adults and young people. Our commitment is underpinned by robust processes and procedures that seek to maximise opportunity, minimise risk and continuously promote a culture that embraces the ethos of safeguarding amongst our workforce.

Please clearly identify within your application the post that that you are applying for, the employment terms you are seeking (i.e. full time, four or three days per week) and whether you wish to be considered for a term time only position.

**Closing date: 2 February 2015**

Please apply for this vacancy via our website [www.nnc.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.nnc.ac.uk/jobs). If you require any further information please contact Human Resources on **01909 504631** or email [vacancies@nnc.ac.uk](mailto:vacancies@nnc.ac.uk).



## Assistant Principal Performance Services and Resources

Salary- £60,431 pa  
Full time



### The Primary purpose of the role is to;

- To provide Leadership to improve the educational performance of the college by improving college services and use of resources
- To work collaboratively to create a highly successful Executive Team contributing to student and staff success
- To provide a high standard of service to students and teachers
- To manage the Human Resources Management, Financial Resource Management/Administration: MIS and ICT Functions; Facility and Property Management and Health & Safety Functions of the College

### Required

- A current member of one of the following professional bodies: ICAEW, ACCA, CIPFA, CIMA or CIPD
- Degree
- Recognized leadership & management qualification and/or extensive professional development , NVQ 3/ 4 or equivalent related professional qualification
- A commitment to providing high standards of service across an organization for internal and external stakeholders
- A commitment to exhibiting the college values of Learning; Responsibility; Independence; Honesty and Excellence and an ability to develop them in others.

Please go to the link for the application form and further details.  
[www.havering-sfc.ac.uk/web/vacancies.cfm](http://www.havering-sfc.ac.uk/web/vacancies.cfm)

**Closing date for applications: Thursday 19th February 2015**  
**Interviews will take place week beginning: 2nd March 2015**

*This college welcomes applications from suitably skilled individuals irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexuality.*



## Director of Student Experience

**FTE 1.0 £55,000 per annum**

Basingstoke College of Technology, situated in north Hampshire, is looking to recruit a Director of Student Experience to join our welcoming and well-respected staff.

Student Services effectively supports the learning and development of students, including their broader student experience and supports staff in other academic and professional services involved in supporting the learner journey. The service covers the following specialist areas:

- Front of House
- Student tutorial programme and student enrichment programme
- Student welfare
- Learner voice and representations
- IAG and Enrolment
- Safeguarding
- Financial and resource management of Directorate
- Examinations and Assessments
- Careers and Progression

As a member of the Senior Management Team and reporting directly to the Deputy Principal Curriculum, Performance and Innovation this post will lead on the strategic development and effective delivery of Student Services.

The ideal candidate will have dynamic leadership experience including successful strategic development of student services function within a complex regulated environment who can confidently take the service to the next level.

*BCoT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its learners, and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake appropriate checks, including an enhanced DBS disclosure as well as providing proof of right to work in the UK.*

*BCoT is an equal opportunities employer ; we welcome enquiries from everyone and value diversity in our workforce.*

**Closing date for applications: Sunday 8th February 2014**

To apply for this post, please click on the link below:-  
[https://www.hirewire.co.uk/FE/1053284/THW\\_JobBoard.aspx](https://www.hirewire.co.uk/FE/1053284/THW_JobBoard.aspx)

If you wish to send a CV with your application, please remember to click 'upload' after attaching it, otherwise your CV will not be sent to us.



Situated on the edge of the Lake District, West Cumbria offers a very high quality of life, with good schools and affordable housing. Lakes College can offer the right person a wonderful opportunity to join us and deliver a workforce for the future of Cumbria.

**Salary: £36,162 - £38,367 dependent upon experience**  
**Relocation Packages Available**

### Programme Area Manager - Engineering

Based in one of Britain's most unspoiled areas, West Cumbria is about to experience developments in Engineering and Construction projects creating significant growth in the regional economy. As part of these exciting and demanding developments, Lakes College is seeking a Programme Area Manager to join us in developing our STEM strategy and delivery to meet the demands of customers and community over the next decade. The successful candidate will be joining an established, progressive college with outstanding financial health. The College has fantastic STEM resources and strong strategic alliances with the Nuclear and Engineering sectors.

### Programme Area Manager - Civil Engineering, the Built Environment and Construction Skills

Earmarked as the site for one of Britain's new generation nuclear power plants, West Cumbria is on the brink of huge growth in construction professions and trades. Working in partnership with key organisations in the nuclear supply chain Lakes College will be the centre of delivering professional and vocational training across a wide range of disciplines. Working from our state of the art £7M purpose built Skills Centre; the successful candidate will oversee current delivery and drive curriculum development to meet the needs of students, partners and the local economy.

### Programme Area Manager - Business, Computing and Professional Studies

Lakes College seeks a driven leader to drive the continued development of its Business, Computing and Professional Studies curriculum. The successful candidate will support the delivery of the Colleges FE and HE curriculum and develop the Colleges growing management, professional and commercial course portfolio. Responsible for a broad curriculum this is a challenging role suited to someone with the vision and drive to succeed.

Our ideal candidates should be able to demonstrate their prior success in leading a diverse and active teaching team, promoting and supporting continuous quality improvement, as well as raising standards' in their area.

For further information and details on how to apply, please visit [www.lcwc.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.lcwc.ac.uk/jobs).

For an informal chat please contact **Michael Hunter, HR Manager, on 01946 839300** (extension 1058).

**Closing Date: Monday 9 February 2015 (12:00 pm)**





Operational and Quality Manager

Halifax, West Yorkshire  
£40,000 - £45,000

Are you passionate about education?

We are looking to recruit a full time Quality and Operations Manager based in The Maltings College in Halifax. As a newly opened college we know that we have a distance to travel and that the path will be challenging.

The successful candidate will have experience of the post 16-19 sector and have a good knowledge of successful operational and quality management. You will be highly organised, have excellent communication skills and be able to motivate and manage a dedicated team.

In addition to leading the quality improvement agenda for the College you will be an integral member of the Senior Management Team with a cross-section of responsibilities and an active role in strategic discussions and decision making. We are looking for a leader with drive, ambition and self-belief; high aspirations for learners; and the ability and credibility to work effectively with a range of partners, both internal and external.

For more information and to apply, please visit [www.maltingscollege.co.uk](http://www.maltingscollege.co.uk)

Closing Date: Thursday 12th February 2015

Interview dates: Thursday 19th February and Monday 23rd February 2015

Quality Coordinator

Speciality Coffee Association of Europe is looking for a Quality Coordinator for its education programme, the Coffee Diploma System. Reporting to the Education Manager, the Quality Coordinator will be responsible for planning and organising activities in relation to internal and external quality assurance processes, exams administration and certification. This post will be based at SCAE headquarters in Bicknacre, Chelmsford and will involve occasional travel to Europe.



Main responsibilities

- To coordinate a programme of observations of SCAE Authorised Trainers within Europe and east Asia;
- To coordinate and undertake a programme of examination audits;
- To develop SCAE's system for monitoring student feedback;
- To maintain quality assurance records, including minutes, and all related documentation as necessary;
- To assist in the Education department's annual Self-Assessment Process;
- To assist in developing quality assurance policies based on vocational and awarding body requirements, and in the improvement of existing policies;
- To assist in new accreditations;
- To assist in awarding body reviews;

Requirements

- Essential
- Understanding of quality assurance processes, preferably within the education sector;
- Meticulous attention to detail;
- Excellent IT skills;
- Excellent organisation and administration skills;
- Ability to prioritise and manage own time effectively;

Desirable

- Experience of working within education sector;
- Proven record of managing a complex administrative workload;
- Knowledge of one or more European language;
- Knowledge of the coffee industry.

Closing date Friday, February 13th

Apply in writing or by email to: **Susan Hollins, Education Manager, Speciality Coffee Association of Europe, Leighams Road, Bicknacre, Chelmsford, Essex. CM3 4HF**

[susan@scae.com](mailto:susan@scae.com)

Assistant Principal  
(Finance and Corporate Development)



Hopwood Hall College is pleased to announce that we are now recruiting for an Assistant Principal (Finance and Corporate Development).

This exciting opportunity has arisen due to the promotion of one of our senior team to a principal's position. Hopwood Hall College is an ambitious, highly performing College serving the people of Rochdale and the wider Greater Manchester community.

At Hopwood Hall College we are determined to do the very best for all our students by continuing to provide an excellent education, which transforms their lives and prospects. To achieve this, in what is a new education landscape and a tough economic climate, requires ambition, innovation and a relentless focus on high quality teaching and learning, and on providing every student with key life and employability skills.

This is a key appointment for a senior post holder at the college to make a major contribution to the FE provision in the local region. The Assistant Principal (Finance and Corporate Development) will be responsible for the strategic

management and delivery of the college's finance and corporate functions. They will lead the College's operational planning and resource management in order to ensure the effective running of the College's business affairs. The remit of the role includes Corporate Services, Management Information, Finance, Funding, Health and Safety and Work Based Learning. The successful candidate must be educated to degree level and CCAB or CIMA qualified.

This is an exciting time to join a college which has "Outstanding" financial health, very strong learner outcomes and student success rates that place us in the top 25% of vocational colleges nationally.

For further information about the role and how to apply please visit: [www.hopwood.ac.uk/ap](http://www.hopwood.ac.uk/ap)

If you wish to arrange an informal discussion regarding this role please contact Karen Morrison, SMT Support Assistant on **0161 643 7560 ext. 3392**.



Lancaster & Morecambe College

Lancaster & Morecambe College is seeking to appoint an outstanding leader and experienced curriculum manager as a Senior Post Holder in its Senior Management Team. You may have aspirations to become a future principal, or wish to develop your career and contribute strategically in a high performing, financially outstanding vocational college situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty, where the quality of life provides the perfect balance to the hard work and commitment required to succeed in this key post.

Director of Curriculum

Salary £60,000 per annum, (open to negotiation for an exceptional candidate)  
37 hours per week

Job Ref: MS 772

You will have current experience in a Senior Management Team and of managing a broad range of vocational curriculum in a Further Education College. Highly motivated and a team player, you will provide inspirational leadership to drive and develop our core provision, responding to the needs of our learners and community, and achieving growth targets. Your strong strategic and analytical approach will be accompanied by a values-driven ethos and excellent people management skills. As a Senior Post Holder and influential senior manager in a post equivalent to that of Vice Principal, you will demonstrate professional credibility and integrity to the Board of Governors and within the College management structure.

If you would like to discuss details of the post with the College Principal, David Wood, please contact his PA on 01524 521289 to arrange a telephone appointment.

Closing Date: Friday 20th February 2015

Interviews will take place on Wednesday & Thursday 18th and 19th March 2015

For more information and to apply please visit: [www.lmc.ac.uk](http://www.lmc.ac.uk) (various formats available). We prefer to email job packs, however if you require one by post, please phone 01524 521507/email [jobs@lmc.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@lmc.ac.uk) All posts are subject to a DBS Disclosure in line with our policy of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.



Director of Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Quality  
Circa £45-47,000 for an exceptional candidate



FNTC Training & Consultancy is a leading provider of Work Based Learning on the South Coast. With offices in Totton, Romsey, the Isle of Wight and Bournemouth, FNTC delivers learning solutions in Childcare and Learning Development, Health & Social Care and Business.

The position of Director of Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Quality is a pivotal role with FNTC. As a member of the Strategic Leadership Team, you will be reporting directly to the Chief Executive. You will be responsible for Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Curriculum Development and Learner Engagement.

The successful applicant will be a strong and effective strategic leader with a genuine passion for education and quality improvement and will be able to bring about change to raise standards in a positive and supportive culture.

For an application pack for this position, please contact [bev.samuel@fntctraining.co.uk](mailto:bev.samuel@fntctraining.co.uk) and if you wish to discuss the role informally and in confidence, please call the Acting Chief Executive, Tina Turner, on **01794 523857**.

Closing date for applications is 6th February 2015, 5.00pm.  
Proposed interview date 13th February 2015.





**Head of School A level and Associated Programmes**  
(REQ000350)  
Farnborough  
£57,408 per annum Full-Time  
Closing Date: 10th February 2015

As an Outstanding College we are looking for an inspirational leader to lead and manage one of our key Academic Schools

Reporting to the Vice Principal the role would suit an experienced practitioner looking to develop their skills in the delivery of a wider academic programme which includes up to four degree courses.

Applicants must hold a relevant degree and teaching qualification. In addition they will need a substantial track record of managing a team, delivering the A level curriculum, and an understanding of degree programmes would also be an advantage.

This is a superb opportunity for a first class applicant to progress their management career particularly at this exciting time with the opening in 2016 of our new University Centre building.



*Farnborough College of Technology is an Equal Opportunities Employer.*

**Head of School for Engineering**  
(REQ000332)  
Farnborough  
£57,408 per annum Full-Time  
Closing Date: 10th February 2015

As an Outstanding College we are looking for an inspirational leader to manage and lead our Flagship School of Engineering.

Based in a state of the art building the School offers a wide range of curriculum choice at both FE and HE level, together with a highly regarded apprenticeship programme.

Reporting directly to the Vice Principal, the role is responsible for the both giving clear strategic direction to the School as well as the day to day operational management.

Applicants must hold a relevant degree and teaching qualification plus a substantial track record of managing a team and developing and delivering the curriculum, ideally both FE and HE level.

This is a superb opportunity for a first class applicant to develop their management career further, particularly at a time when the College is looking to expand our Higher Education offer. In return we can offer a fresh challenge and a rewarding opportunity with an excellent benefits package.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, AND TO APPLY, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [WWW.FARN-CT.AC.UK/JOBS](http://WWW.FARN-CT.AC.UK/JOBS)



**Pre-Sales Consultant, Employers market**  
Home based in the UK with travel as required

**OTE of circa £44k to include salary, car allowance and bonus/commission**

Tribal’s mission is to create, build and deliver a range of world class technology based products and services that help our education, learning and training customers deliver excellence.

We are genuinely passionate about improving access to learning and helping to deliver the highest quality education and training. Like many of our clients, we want to feel that our work makes a positive difference.

We currently have an exciting opportunity for a dynamic, innovative and flexible Pre-Sales Consultant to join our sales team who is responsible for selling software solutions into the Employers market.

The pre-sales team provides vital support to the sales process, working closely with colleagues across the business to help achieve sales objectives. The team is responsible for assisting with the sales of software and services at multiple levels of seniority with responsibility for demonstrations, bid writing support and product updates.

We are looking for an engaging, confident and ambitious problem-solver with bags of initiative. Excellent customer-facing, organisational and presentation skills are a must as is a can-do attitude and the ability to build and maintain effective working relationships. The ideal candidate will be a natural communicator with the ability to influence and negotiate. A thorough understanding of the Employers and/or Work Based Learning markets is required as is knowledge of ebs, Maytas, e-track or Go Learn.

**If you are looking for a new challenge with an evolving entrepreneurial organisation that produces market leading products and solutions, please apply today by searching for this vacancy on our recruitment portal and completing an online application form: [jobs.tribalgroup.com](http://jobs.tribalgroup.com)**

Tribal is committed to creating an environment that enables employees to balance their responsibilities inside and outside of work. To achieve this we encourage and support a range of flexible patterns for all colleagues.

Tribal is an equal opportunities employer and has publicly committed to this by signing up to the Two Ticks Positive About Disabled People scheme. This ensures that all disabled applicants, able to demonstrate that they meet the minimum criteria of the job description, are guaranteed an interview.





## Sessional Lecturer in English / Sessional Lecturer in Maths

Langley, SL3 8BY | £23.23 per hour

Casual, Part Time

We are a thriving Further Education college, with over 500 staff providing high quality training and education to some 8,500 students and 2,000 employers. Our campuses in Langley and Windsor serve the diverse communities of Berkshire and West London.

As well as a genuinely satisfying and rewarding job, you can look forward to excellent benefits and ongoing training and professional development opportunities. Please visit our jobs and careers page for further information. In this role you will ensure delivery of high quality teaching and effective learning within the English and Maths department.

You will demonstrate extensive knowledge of your subject area together with the drive and passion to motivate students to achieve. The experience and confidence to plan, prepare and deliver effective teaching programmes, including the use of Information Learning Technology (ILT). Enthusiastic, methodical and flexible in your approach, you will share your skills and knowledge with learners and utilise your previous experience of teaching to motivate students to achieve, ideally whilst developing and maintaining high levels of student retention. A natural communicator

and proven motivator, you'll thrive on student interaction – giving effective guidance and helping them make the most of their futures.

For details of the role and person specification please see the job description.

To apply, please complete the online application form by visiting [www.eastberks.ac.uk/](http://www.eastberks.ac.uk/)

For enquiries, please call us on **0845 373 2500** and ask for the HR team on extension 3325 or email us on [jobs@eastberks.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@eastberks.ac.uk)

**Interview Date: 23/02/2015**

All salaries quoted are based on Full Time equivalent hours. For part time and term time positions, the actual salary paid will be pro-rata based on the actual contractual hours and working weeks per year.

*The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all its staff to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to undergo a DBS check at the appropriate level.*



## 0.5 LECTURER - FUNCTIONAL SKILLS (MATHS) Maternity Cover

**POST NO: LB125M | SALARY: UP TO £36,066 PER ANNUM PRO RATA (DEPENDING ON TEACHING QUALIFICATION STATUS)**

We require a Functional Skills Maths Tutor, experienced in delivering Functional Skills maths qualifications to apprentices and to adults from Entry 1 to Level 2. You will have excellent communication, IT and number skills, with a positive 'can do' attitude and have the ability to work as part of a team and independently. You will be an excellent administrator – well organised and able to meet deadlines.

You must have at least a Level 3 qualification in Maths and a teaching qualification, both of which are essential in order to deliver programmes in a timely manner to ensure high levels of student satisfaction, attendance, retention and ultimately success

Delivery may be at community venues, employers' premises and at the main College campuses.


For further information, please contact Sarah McDonald, Head of School Community and Skills for Life on 0121 678 7167.

We are also seeking hourly paid Lecturers within the School of Functional Skills; if you are interested in applying for hourly paid work please complete an application form identifying 'Hourly Paid Lecturer – Functional Skills' in the Post Applied for Section. The hourly rate payable for sessional work is £23.26 per hour (to include preparation and marking).

Closing date: Monday 9th February 2015



## Lecturers English or Maths



Variable hours – 37 hrs p/w. £24,662 - £28,568 p/a depending on experience (Maths attracts an additional Market Rate Allowance of £2040) p/a).

We are on a journey to being outstanding. We need motivated and professional individuals who are dynamic, inspirational, and innovative to join us on that journey.

If you are looking for a new challenge and would like to utilise your skills and knowledge whilst developing your own career, this opportunity will be rewarding and fulfilling. In this role you will teach young people (16-19yrs) English or Maths, which will enable them to fulfil their career aspirations and empower them to embark on working life.

If you have the qualities to deliver innovative and creative teaching for GCSE (and related English and Maths qualifications) to a variety of learning levels, then we will welcome your application. This is an ideal opportunity for new graduates to develop a career in the Further Education sector, but we are also seeking applications from experienced teachers who will bring knowledge of delivering these subjects to a high standard. A degree in a subject related to your chosen discipline is essential, as is a minimum of Level 2 in English/Maths and IT.

If you have exceptional communication skills and the ability to prioritise and coordinate a challenging workload, this may be the right role for you. You will be a self starter, who can quickly develop a good rapport with young people.

The College offers many good employment benefits including generous holiday entitlement, pension scheme, and many on-site benefits and facilities. This position will be based at our Peterborough Park Crescent site.

To find out more about teaching at Peterborough Regional College, and to apply visit: [www.peterborough.ac.uk](http://www.peterborough.ac.uk) vacancy reference 99927

Don't just settle for same old, same old.

# Innovate.

**Electrical Tutor** Birmingham Minimum £33,000 Ref: ETU011.

**Electrical Training Officer** Solihull/Redditch £27,500 rising to £29,000 Ref: ETO015.

**Essential Skills Trainer** Birmingham/Staffordshire £25,000 Ref: EST022.

**Closing date for all roles: 6th February.**

We welcome applicants from all sections of the community. JTL is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all its employees to share this commitment. Successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS disclosure. Please note: an online application form must be completed, we cannot accept CVs. Strictly no agencies please.

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## Protocol

Excellence in FE



## The Opportunity of a Lifetime...

Female EFL lecturers needed to teach in Saudi Arabia

We are currently looking to fill 50 of these fantastic roles in Al Qatif, with accommodation provided in Al Khubar, one of the most desirable areas in Saudi Arabia.

To be considered you must have a minimum of 3 years teaching experience and one or more of these qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in English Language, Literature or Applied Linguistics
- TESOL
- CELTA
- English teaching major


In return you will receive:

- Salary up to **£35,000** paid tax free
- Annual bonus
- Fully furnished accommodation
- Healthcare
- Annual flight allowance
- Relocation allowance
- Transportation allowance
- 35 days annual leave
- College subsidised social programme

To apply please send your CV and covering letter to [SaudiEFL@Protocol.co.uk](mailto:SaudiEFL@Protocol.co.uk)

Call: +44 (0)115 911 1173

[www.protocol.co.uk/ksa](http://www.protocol.co.uk/ksa)



## FULL TIME MATHS & ENGLISH TUTOR/TEACHER - £35,000PA OTE

**LOCATION: ENGLAND**

Due to the outstanding successes of our work to date, we are looking to recruit a new team of 15 experienced Skills for Life tutors.

You will be delivering English and Maths from Entry Level through to Level 2, contextualised with a vocational award. Some delivery will be in the Health and Social Care sector, and therefore any experience in the H&SC sector would be an advantage but not essential.

The role will be working on a peripatetic basis, delivering in your region. Willingness to travel and your own transport are essential.

**ESSENTIAL CRITERIA – PLEASE DO NOT APPLY IF YOU CAN'T COMPLY:**

- Full time ONLY with flexible hours
- Have achieved a recognised full teaching qualification – Cert Ed / PGCE / DTLLS or equivalent
- Experience in teaching English and/or Maths
- Outstanding personal written and verbal communication skills
- A driving license and access to your own transportation

**HIGHLY DESIRED CRITERIA:**

- Experience of working with adult learners
- Working towards or have achieved a Level 4/5 Subject Specialist qualification in Literacy and/or Numeracy
- Excellent ICT Skills

The successful candidate will also be required to have a valid DBS Clearance Check.

In the first instance, please send an email outlining your recent relevant experience together with your CV.

NCC Skills Ltd is an Equal Opportunities Employer

No agencies please [amanda.fisher@ncc.ac.uk](mailto:amanda.fisher@ncc.ac.uk)

[www.ncc.ac.uk](http://www.ncc.ac.uk)



# EEWeek

## The context

Being Outstanding, BCoT has achieved significant success in the last year. We are now on our way to becoming an 'outstanding' college.

**The role.** BCoT's strategic development plan is to enhance the role of the Deputy Principal in the enhancement of quality and innovation in the curriculum. The role will involve leading and managing all curriculum provision, ensuring that the college is a world leader in curriculum innovation and improvement in learning and teaching.

**The person.** You will be in a leading and highly visible curriculum role that will require a demonstrated successful engagement with curriculum improvement and innovation in learning and teaching.

You will have experience of motivating and leading staff to deliver all curriculum provision amongst peers, and have credibility and presence in external contexts.

**How to apply.** You can access a candidate pack at [www.hirewire.co.uk/FE/1053284/THW\\_JobBoard.aspx](http://www.hirewire.co.uk/FE/1053284/THW_JobBoard.aspx)

Candidates looking for an informal conversation can arrange this by contacting **01256 306369**.

BCoT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its learners. The successful applicant will be required to undergo background checks, including an enhanced DBS.

BCoT is an equal opportunities employer and we welcome enquiries from everyone and value diversity in our workforce.

## DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

### Curriculum and Quality

**c. £90,000 + Benefits**

When Ofsted rated us Inadequate in November 2011 we didn't consider it a challenge. We recruited our new Principal and Deputy Principal and they set the pace and in 26 months we've travelled from inadequate to Good with Outstanding features. We've already been on an incredible journey and today our success rates are in the top 20% of colleges nationally. But Good isn't good enough.

With you maintaining our momentum and focus, our next step will be Outstanding. You will be on the board, inspiring colleagues with your leadership expertise, you will ensure a high quality of outcomes for our students and staff. You will be expected to lead in curriculum and innovation that have delivered significant improvements in our standards. Whilst having the ability to manage a large team, you will also be a people person who will prove to be a great asset to everything we do.

**necc**  
North East Chamber of Commerce

There is no one better qualified to lead our learners' ability to make informed decisions, a job and be responsible citizens. Achieve more.

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“

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**Suzanne Sunter, Senior personnel administrator,  
Lancaster and Morecambe College**

”

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Thursday 5 March 2015

Crowne Plaza, Wollaton Street, Nottingham NG1 5RH

For more information about our speakers, the programme and to book your place visit [www.emfec.co.uk/annual-conference-2015](http://www.emfec.co.uk/annual-conference-2015)



FE Week Sudoku challenge

3			2		4		7	
				8			5	
		9	6			3		
	9							
1	7						9	5
							4	
		4			6	7		
	8			1				
	3		4		5			2

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

	3				2	6		9
					7		3	
1				5	6			
							5	8
2		7				4		3
5	9							
			2	6				1
	4		9					
9		1	5				4	

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Solutions:  
Next week

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Last Week's solutions

6	4	3	8	5	2	7	1	9
8	9	1	6	3	7	5	2	4
7	5	2	4	1	9	6	3	8
2	1	4	7	6	8	9	5	3
9	7	8	3	2	5	4	6	1
3	6	5	1	9	4	2	8	7
1	3	9	5	7	6	8	4	2
5	8	7	2	4	3	1	9	6
4	2	6	9	8	1	3	7	5

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

5	7	9	2	4	3	1	6	8
6	1	3	5	9	8	2	7	4
4	8	2	7	1	6	3	9	5
3	6	5	8	7	1	4	2	9
8	9	1	4	5	2	6	3	7
2	4	7	6	3	9	8	5	1
9	3	8	1	6	5	7	4	2
7	2	6	9	8	4	5	1	3
1	5	4	3	2	7	9	8	6

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Spot the difference to WIN an FE Week mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.  
Last week's spot the difference winner was Paul Saunders, head of geography at St Joseph's Catholic High School, Slough.